



Christian Courier

A REFORMED WEEKLY

JANUARY 6, 1995/NO. 2426

South Africa puts up a brave front

John Platjes

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — Beyond the blue-green breakers whales sport in the deep water, waving the occasional swallow tail at people on shore. Along the edge of the road skirting the beach rocks vendors sell artifacts. More than half a dozen are from Zambia. The vendors, all black, sell their wares without permits. Whites and Indians have to have permits before they can peddle their wares.

South Africa is under a new regime. It's a country totally different from any other African state. It's also radically different from the country I left 25 years ago.

There are many positive signs of change and many indications of progress and prosperity. It's a new season of rising expectations — like the opening of a

whole box of new toys.

But there are also many undercurrents of trouble. Besides souring racial relations, there is the danger of recriminations that will poison relations at high levels and could prematurely break up the government of national unity.

Too much poverty

South Africa harbors more than 300,000 illegal immigrants from Zimbabwe. They put up their shanties anywhere and become squatters, even on other people's property, refusing to move when asked. Serious crime has increased 300 per cent in the past six months.

At almost every intersection and stoplight people beg for food. One Sunday afternoon while we were driving home from a church service and

See MANDELA page 2...



Women living in a South African shanty.

Retired CRC pastors ask their church to reconsider synod's decision against ordaining women

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — A group of 15 Christian Reformed pastors (one active and 14 retired) have issued a statement condemning Synod 1994's decision which continued to deny women the right to be ordained. The pastors' statement calls for an acceptance of diverse views on the issue and for "an ongoing dialogue in a spirit of mutual trust and appreciation — in the confidence that the Holy Spirit will guide the Christian Reformed Church towards a deeper insight in God's word and will."

"Many members within the [CRC] have experienced Synod 1994's decision re: women's ordination as being exceedingly hurtful and offensive," says the statement. "Some of these members perceive this decision as an act of outright hostility of

a group of men against all the women in this denomination." But the statement adds, "we trust that the intention of the decision is not to take a clear position against women."

The statement also suggests that "healing of the brokenness resulting from the decision can only begin where there is a recognition, at all levels of our denomination, of the fact that, within our church, there is no consensus about the way in which the Scriptures must be read and interpreted."

Not all signed

Dirk Habermehl, a retired CRC pastor living in Cobourg, Ont., wrote the statement. In early November he and a number of other retired pastors met in Whitby, Ont., to discuss it, and those in agreement signed it.

Retired pastors mostly from Ontario were contacted about the statement. Active pastors were not contacted because the statement "makes active pastors quite vulnerable," says Habermehl.

Some pastors contacted disagreed with the statement, and one, Martin Geleynse of Stratford, Ont., was not contacted because he was known to oppose ordaining women.

Honest opinion

One active pastor who supports the statement is Peter Van Egmond of Brampton, Ont. Two years ago, he and Jacob Kuntz, a retired pastor, also of Brampton, made a "plea for unity" and campaigned in support of ordaining women. Van Egmond describes the statement as "our honest opinion in the light of the Scriptures."

His congregation supports his

views, says Van Egmond, and if there is any "flak" he can handle it.

A serious sticking point for Van Egmond is Synod 1994's statement that "the clear teaching of Scripture" prohibits women from holding offices of minister, elder and evangelist. That is "the one clause I strongly object to," he says.

Habermehl also objects to this. "To suggest human interpretation of Scripture is infallible is wrong," he says, referring to synod's interpretation of the issue. "We don't want any canonization of any interpretation."

"They cannot say that the Bible teaches clearly" on this issue, agrees Remkes Kooistra, a retired pastor in Waterloo, Ont., who also signed the statement.

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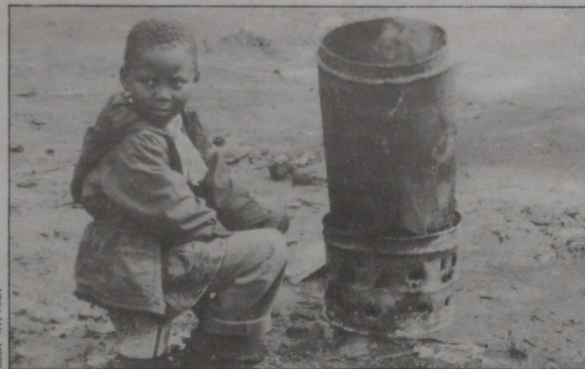
Mandela carries heavy responsibilities

...continued from page 1

stopped for a red light, three blacks rushed up to our car, offering to wash the windshield for a fee. If you don't let them, they may pull you from the car, rob you and drive away with your car. It has happened to dozens of people.

The new minister of police has called in all illegal firearms, but only a smattering of weapons have been handed in. Many hand grenades and A-K rifles are still out there.

The number of break-ins have stimulated the alarm system business. No fewer than 24 pages of the "Yellow Pages" are taken up by advertisements from security companies. In-



BERT WITVOET

Impoverishment: the result of decades of neglect.

urance companies refuse to insure any home that has not been properly burglar-proofed.

Joe Shlovo, a formerly banned communist, has been made minister of housing. Even

the Afrikaans press has expressed admiration for the way he is handling the housing crisis. But as long as illegal immigrants swell the ranks of the homeless, Mr. Shlovo will have an extremely difficult task.

The impoverishment of millions of blacks is the result of decades of neglect, inadequate education, low wages and the intransigence of successive governments to the plight of the poor because of the fear of competition against the white elitist class.

A heavy burden

South Africa is a deeply divided country putting up a brave front to the outside world. President Nelson Mandela needs all of his stature and more

to carry out his heavy responsibilities.

The man has a punishing presidential overload. Even while on holidays in an Arabian desert, he attended to official business. He cannot be expected to put out all the fires in his homeland. The 75-year-old president is burning the candle at both ends.

He is held in high esteem all around the world. World statesmen compete to shake his hand. His dedication to peace and his commitment to reconciliation is remarkable. It would be a pity should he have to withdraw from his duties because of sheer exhaustion. South Africa would suffer a severe setback were that to happen.

Pastors plead for dialogue

...continued from page 1

Habermehl is also concerned that synod has tried to close to further discussion the issue of ordaining women. "We feel that was way out in left field," he says. "We plead for further dialogue rather than closure."

Another concern Habermehl has is the "gender polarization" caused by the 1994 decision.

Van Egmond and the other pastors who signed the statement agree that the issue of ordaining women should be raised at Synod 1995. "It cannot wait for five years," says Kooistra.

But the pastors themselves have decided to raise the issue at the level of councils and classes rather than at the next synod.

alternative, the church is now working on a different church structure in which women could be "directors" rather than



Rev. Martin Geleynse

elders. Local churches should be allowed to make decisions on this type of thing, says Kooistra.

Thankful but critical

Martin Geleynse, however, supports Synod 1994's decision. He was not contacted about the statement because he had already expressed his views in *Christian Courier*, says

Kooistra.

Referring to Synod 1994's stand, Geleynse says, "I was very thankful.... I thought it was the right decision."

However, he agrees with Kooistra that Scripture is not clear about the issue. Geleynse says that synod's wording on the issue was "offensive" to those who believe ordaining women is right.

Geleynse expects more discussion of this issue at future synods, but says that other issues should be focused on instead. He believes a majority of CRC pastors in Canada probably support ordaining women.

Does the issue divide?

One key section of the pastors' statement reads, "In a situation of conflict, it is never the issue which divides people, but our choice to allow that issue to divide persons." Habermehl says he put that statement in partly because of his background in family psychiatry. "The issue of women in office is not necessarily divisive" unless people make it so, he says.

"I would think that's true," agrees Geleynse.

But John Derksen, a retired pastor in Kitchener who signed the statement, disagrees on this point. "It was definitely the issue that divided the people," he says.

"It's good to have differences of opinion," says Kooistra. "It's how we deal with the issue" that makes a difference, he says.

CRC lower assemblies face synodical fall-out

Bert Witvoet

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Several Canadian classes of the Christian Reformed Church will discuss Synod 1994's decision not to allow the ordination of women as elders, evangelists and ministers. With one exception, all classes which meet this month will deal with one or more overtures on this issue from their member churches. Most of these overtures protest the fact that one side of the debate has been declared unbiblical by synod.

The stated clerk of Classis Toronto, John Tenyenhuis, reports that there are two overtures to his classis asking for an appeal of the decision of Synod '94, one from Willowdale CRC and one from First CRC. In addition, there are two reports from a classical study committee, the majority report opposing and the minority report supporting synod's decision.

Classis Quinte reports one overture protesting synod's decision, as does Classis Niagara. Both overtures ask that local churches be given the right to decide the matter for themselves.

Stated clerk Hilbert Rumph of Classis Huron says that Waterloo CRC has sent in an extensive overture asking Synod 1995 "to declare the question of women in the special offices of the church a disputable matter that cannot be decided without impugning the integrity of one side or the other." It also asks for the "local option" to be implemented.

Classis Chatham will deal with a large number of overtures related to ordaining women, reports stated clerk Jan Vandergeest. Three seek an appeal of Synod '94's decision; three oppose any changes made to the CRC's Church Order Article which restricts the offices of elders, evangelists and ministers to male members of the church; and three address the actions of Classis Grand Rapids East in Michigan. (That classis has approved, in principle, a motion allowing each member church to decide if the word "male" in Church Article 3 is operative.)

Classis Hamilton is the only Canadian classis which will meet this month that so far has no overture on its agenda regarding the ordination of women.

Churches have an opportunity to hand in an overture along with their credentials, but each classis then has to decide at its meeting whether it wants to entertain such an overture.

Five Canadian classes — Alberta North, Alberta South, B.C. Northwest, B.C. Southeast and Eastern Canada — hold their winter meetings in March instead of January. They have not yet set their agendas and are unable to report on incoming overtures.

Being a voice

"We have no official voice," says Kooistra. "We hope that other people will pick it up.... We wanted to be a voice calling in the desert."

Kooistra's congregation, Waterloo CRC, is "very much in favor of women's leadership," he says. "At the last classis, we asked permission to ordain women elders. We did not get that permission." As an

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Comment

The 'bigger' the print, the better the contract

Bill Van Dyk

I used to be in charge of benefits administration at a small social service agency. It was my job to evaluate and understand all the provisions of

could ever really agree to it. But that's not what he said. He said that of course the fine print applied. It's all part of the agreement. He tried to convince me that all insurance companies

rates in half. Just like that! So much for the assumption that our insurance company was making a "reasonable" profit.

We cancelled anyway and switched to another company with more agreeable small print.

Have you ever thought about the fact that the biggest agreement of all, God's covenant with us, is phrased in the plainest, most straightforward language you can imagine? *I will be your God. You will be my people. I will send a Redeemer. I will never again destroy the earth with a flood. He who believes in me shall never die.*

"Small print" exists because lawyers write most of these agreements and, like many other professionals, consciously or not, then want to ensure that they'll always have plenty of work. The fine print is there because insurance companies want to be able to protect themselves against having too many claims filed. It is there because banks don't want you to know how obscene the interest rates on charge cards really are, or how much power they have to destroy your life if you forget to make a single payment on a loan.

Did you know, for example, that a lot of home-owner's policies have a provision that during any extended absence by the homeowner, the insured

house must be entered and inspected by someone every day? And there you were in Florida in your lawn chair feeling so comfy and reassured.

Ban fine print

A lot of people won't believe this, but there is no need in the universe for fine print. It should be abolished, banned, exiled, censored, shredded. The law will not collapse. The courts will not be inundated with frivolous claims. Injustice will not prevail. In fact, I am quite sure the opposite will happen.

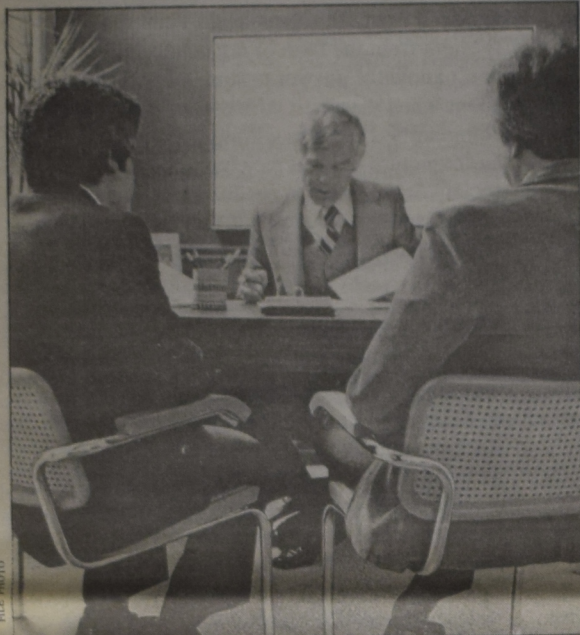
A holding company in Toronto which rented 30,000 apartment units tried to eliminate all the small print in its leases. The new lease agreements basically said, "You agree to pay so much money every month so you can live in this apartment at this address. You agree not to damage the apartment. We agree to

maintain the apartment. If you don't pay the rent, you have to leave. If we don't maintain the apartment, you don't have to pay the rent." Done. In plain English.

What happened? The company saved thousands of dollars in legal fees every year because everybody understood the agreements and, as a result, were far less inclined to challenge or break them. The tenants loved the agreements. They understood them. They had the wonderful feeling that they weren't about to be tricked or cheated because they didn't have the time to read 20 pages of incomprehensible legalese.

The only drawback... ahem... is that most lawyers would be put out of business.

Bill Van Dyk is a computer consultant and freelance writer who lives in Chatham, Ont.



Going over the fine-print with clients.

our benefit package in order to file claims and explain our benefits to new employees.

I must have been more stupid than most: I got out the policies and actually tried to read them. Every word. Well, not exactly every word. I figured it would take two months or more to read every word, and another 10 years to fully understand all those words. But I did read a lot of inscrutable text about all the subtle little conditions, "notwithstanding," "wherewithals" and provisions. I discovered that our liability coverage allowed so many exceptions that I doubted it actually covered anything. Sometimes I couldn't believe what I was reading. It sounded so contrary to good sense, I thought I must have misunderstood it.

Foggy meanings mean fat profits

I phoned our agent and asked him to explain. In the back of my mind I think I expected him to say that the small print didn't mean anything because, of course, no reasonable person could ever find enough time to read it and, therefore, no one

had the same basic agreements.

I called some of those other companies and found out that that was not true. When I told him we intended to cancel the policy he offered to cut our

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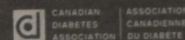


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Editorial

Will 1995 be a year of authentic community?

Another year is dawning, dear Father, let it be... what? Another year of trying to survive?

I read the two reports of the Christian Reformed Church's synodical committee to study "clarification of public profession of faith for covenant children," which will be presented to Synod 1995. One of these reports makes an arresting comment when it compares the focus of the 16th century church with that of the 20th century church. "We generally agree that the primary issue of the Reformation was soteriology, how one is saved," says Report B. Then it continues: "Authentic community is probably the primary issue today."

The report does not elaborate on this latter statement, which strikes me as a profound observation. That's because the statement functions as a subpoint in the larger argument that communal faith is the prerequisite for celebrating the Lord's Supper. Nevertheless,

the statement intrigues. If it is true that authentic community is the primary issue for churches today, then we ought to hear more about it. Is anyone writing about this in an explicit way?

Perhaps we ought to pray to the Father that it may be another year of authentic community (*echte gemeenschap* in Dutch).

What does it mean?

One way of acknowledging that authentic community is the primary issue is to talk about the importance of being the Body of Christ. I interpret the word "authentic" to mean that Christ is really present in our midst, and that we as letters are truly written by him. There is no pretence in our worship and service of Christ. We depend on him for our strength and success. Only Christ can give authenticity to our community.

So we could ask the Father that 1995 be a year of experiencing Christ's presence.

What "authentic community" also means for me is that we take the idea of being a community seriously. We uphold the norms for community, which include communication, honesty, non-manipulation by leaders, caring for and sharing with each other, suffering with each other, building each other up, rejoicing with each other.

We could ask the Father that 1995 be a year of making sound edifices of each other.

But it also means that a community stays authentic by not covering up honest differences and by acknowledging its dark sides. We must keep on challenging each other without becoming judgmental. Are we listening to and learning from each other? Are we willing to rock the boat when it has a big leak? Are we

encouraging each other to be faithful in our walk and to spill over in doing good?

Dear Father, let 1995 be a year of mutual challenge.

"Authentic community" for me means that we avoid individualism in our faith. In other words, if my faith seems weak, I can get strength from the faith of my community. If I don't know the answer to something, I can pray about it and discuss it with others in the community. I am also willing to look at the larger picture of what the community, our society or the creation needs, rather than reduce every issue to how it affects me.

Dear Father, let 1995 be a year of the big picture.

Strangers in community

Why is being an authentic community so important today? Because our world is busy eroding communities. Work places are seldom work communities. They feel more like survival stations. Schools are not learning communities but dispensaries of fragmented knowledge and gathering places for cliques. Homes are not communities so much as drop-in centres for the chronically distracted. Neighborhoods are places where hoods hang out or where neighbors park their cars.

In such an alien world, it is crucial that families, churches, agencies and work places be authentic communities. The church, especially, can play a leading role here. Come to think of it, isn't that the reason the book of Acts gives for the growth of the church in the first century? Acts 1: 42-47 reads like a textbook on authentic community.

So here comes 1995. Dear Father, let it be 365 days of authentic community. **BW**

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- provides opportunities for contact and discussion for the Christian community.

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Fifty years is quite 'somezing'

This is going to be a big year for *Christian Courier*. As the logo on our front page indicates, this is the year that we celebrate our golden anniversary. Fifty years ago, on August 6, 1945, the first issue of *Canadian Calvinist* rolled off a stencil machine in Edmonton. The machine probably belonged to First Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton, where editor Rev. Paul De Koekoek was pastor.

An anniversary committee is planning a variety of ways in which we can celebrate this anniversary. The logo contest was the first one. We're happy to announce that Doug Roorda of St. Catharines, Ont., has won the contest. His logo will be featured on every front page of CC this year, and he will receive \$50 and a year's

free subscription to CC. We want to thank the other artists who submitted their designs to us.

Starting with this issue, we will reprint small items from past issues of CC (see p.5). These will remind us of where we came from.

We will keep you, the reader, informed about future events. The actual anniversary celebrations will be held this fall. The focus of such an anniversary will, no doubt, be of a covenant sort: we want to highlight God's faithfulness and encourage our community's cheerful response. All of this will require creativity and enthusiasm.

In 1995, CC stands for "creative covenant."

BW

Letters

Christian schools better off without a union

Your editorials on Christian schools and labor unions (Dec. 9 and 16) prompt me to write this letter.

I would like to think that Christian schools are different. I would like to think that they are a co-operative effort, a joint venture between parents and teachers. The phrase *in loco parentis* sticks in my mind. The teachers are doing their job of teaching the children of the Christian community "in place of the parent." While mother and/or father are trying to earn a living, the teachers as servants of God try to make the students see the greatness of God's creation and its wonderful intricacy and guide them to responsible service to the Lord.

I would like to think that Christian schools are a community of students and teachers and parents. I would like to think that they can communicate to each other without the help of a third party. To me having a labor union serve as a mediator smacks of conflict counselling — a task a union, biased to favor one party, is

most certainly unsuitable to accomplish in this particular instance.

Brings less security

I can see why Christian school teachers feel insecure. There is a slowly shrinking market for them. Not only that: the Christian community has a lot of self-employed people in the construction trade who have been hit hard during the past years. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find that extra dollar to balance the budgets.

At the last Quinte Christian High School (Belleville, Ont.) board meeting we discussed the unionizing of two Christian schools. Judging by the reaction from all board members, CLAC has lost a lot of goodwill in the Christian community. The consensus was that CLAC has shot itself in the foot by enrolling these teachers.

Of course it is a union's job to organize workers, but I like to think that a Christian union has a prior mandate. I like to think that their first commission is to promote Christian unity

and foster Christian solidarity. Now suddenly, in a time when there already is a lot of anger in the world, they have given cause to have this anger focused on them and their union members. The result will be that, instead of teachers gaining more financial security, they will have even less, as parents will see this as a reason (perhaps invalid) to withdraw from Christian education, resulting in diminished enrolment and less need for teachers.

Golden opportunity

The move has its positive aspects as well. I believe that boards, correctly, will seek better liaison with the teachers. The QCHS board decided to have the board chairperson attend one teachers' meeting each month, just as the principal attends the monthly board meetings. This will automatically increase board-teacher contact.

We live in rapidly changing times and the move by the staffs of the Brampton and St. Catharines Christian Schools is a symptom of malaise in the

Christian community. I hope that rather than boards stiffening their attitudes, they will re-examine their positions. The Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools is also taking this seriously. I believe that the steps they have taken and are taking are correct and will, I hope, prevent further fracturing.

It seems to me that this unfortunate development presents

the Ontario Alliance with a golden opportunity to re-examine the entire Christian school system in the light of a different economic milieu and changing, more inclusive, concepts of Christian education.

**Bert Hielema, Chair
Quinte Christian High
School Board
Belleville, Ont.**



50th anniversary rearview

Because 1995 is the 50th anniversary year for *Christian Courier*, formerly known as *The Canadian Calvinist*, *The Contact* and *Calvinist Contact*. During this year, each issue of CC will carry a small item from earlier editions of our paper.

From the Nov. 15, 1945 issue of *The Canadian Calvinist*:

"Language in worship"

Recently two individuals of other churches volunteered the information that their services are conducted exclusively in the language of their fathers, and that, as a result, youth takes little interest in religious matters. It is hard to be optimistic about the future of such churches and their youth. I thank God that our churches are taking a wiser course. We must see to it, however, that though the language changes, our **DISTINCTIVENESS** remains. It can be done, in prayerful dependence on God and by living according to his Word.

(This first "Rearview" was selected by anniversary committee member Nandy Heule.)

R.I.P., Peter and Marja?

Is the editor truly surprised at the lack of cries for help directed at Peter and Marja, despite the column's popularity? Could it be that some in our community are just a little obsessed with other's dirty laundry? How many readers try to decipher the identity of various authors? How many, with righteous indignation, smugly say, "Better them than us"?

Readers don't enjoy it be-

cause "it's about people like themselves," but for exactly the opposite reason. It is (or was) about people *unlike* themselves — gutsy folk who don't mind wearing their problems on their sleeves. It seems, though, that there are many more people who would rather read about other peoples' problems than write about their own. As far as I'm concerned, CC has more integrity and respectability without a gossip — oops, I

mean *advice* column.

R.I.P., P and M.

**Rob Janssens
Burlington, Ont.**

Check your lexicon

"Incongruency"? Now what kind of a word is that? (Dec. 9, front page, under the picture of the Moscow convent.)

Perhaps you mean "incongruity"?

Have a blessed Christmas and New Year, and keep up the good work.

**Winnie Haagsma
Sarnia, Ont.**

gruity" (as you suggest) or "incongruence." The *Webster's dictionary* treats both options as synonyms of each other. Is there a difference in usage?

Editor



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Thank you for pointing out an illiteracy on our part. Or is a misspelled word? It depends on what one aims for — "incon-

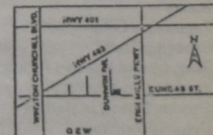
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Agriculture

Rendezvous with danger

A few winters ago, one icy day when the country roads were very slippery, I came across a little truck in a deep, sloping ditch. The truck, driven by a local veterinarian who was in a hurry to get to a sick cow, had been going too fast for the road conditions and plowed through a snow bank and into a ditch.

A nearby farmer had his tractor parked on the snowy road and was trying to find a solid piece of steel on the little truck where he could fasten one end of a long chain. I stopped to see if I could help. I was horrified when the farmer hooked the other end of the chain to the top link of his tractor's three-point-hitch.

I have been to numerous International Plowing Matches and farm machinery shows at which the Ontario Farm Safety Association has a farm safety exhibit showing how easily

tractors can be tipped backwards when a chain is hooked too high.

You're supposed to hook on to the lower draw bar and never to the higher three-point-hitch link. Every year farmers get killed when their tractor rolls backwards on top of them. I know of two county farmers who were burned to death when the gasoline-powered tractor they were operating to pull out stuck vehicles caught fire when it tipped backwards. They were pinned underneath the fiery machine and couldn't escape.

Averting an awful death

So I wasn't going to be a witness to an accident in which a farmer had a tractor tip over on him on a country road with a young vet looking on. I pointed out the dangers but the farmer laughed, saying he needed the traction in order to get the truck out of the snowy ditch. He said

he had done it many times and "you just have to do it carefully." He didn't think his 80 h.p. four-wheel drive tractor could pull the truck out of the ditch if he hooked on to the lower drawbar.

The young vet didn't understand what we were arguing about and probably thought I should be minding my own business. I was really agitated because I knew the tractor could pull the little truck without having to risk an accident.

The farmer got on the tractor and pulled slowly. The tractor didn't spin and didn't tip over. He was right. The tractor's front end was heavy enough to stay on the ground. If he had had a smaller, lighter tractor that didn't have four-wheel drive, he might not have been so lucky. New tractors, by the way, must have roll-bars which prevent the tractor from rolling over and

tipping backwards.

'Hook low, drive slow'

The Ontario Farm Safety Association organized a major exhibit and demonstration program at the new outdoor farm show in mid-September near Bulford, Ont.

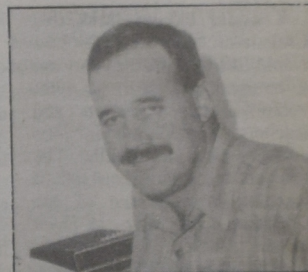
Such hazard demonstrations always draw large crowds to the Farm Safety Association. These demonstrations provide a stark reminder of how farm accidents can destroy life and limb in an instant. Straw dummies are used in many of the demonstrations to provide a better sense of what happens to a person whose loose clothing gets caught in the tractor's power-take-off.

I saw how a little Ford tractor, operated by remote control, tipped over backwards in a few seconds when a chain was hooked onto the top link, the

Agricultural

Housekeeping

Maynard VanderGallen



tractor flipped over immediately.

HOOK LOW, DRIVE SLOW WHEN PULLING. That was the message.

Maynard VanderGallen farms in the Ottawa Valley, Renfrew, Ont. He is very safety conscious.

Letter

The philosophy of Dooyeweerd has been unproductive

Bert Witvoet's article: "Dooyeweerd Centre: up against the swine" and Al Wolters' article: "Dooyeweerd Centre opens: not ashamed of the Name" (CC Nov. 18, 1994, pp. 4 and 14, respectively) cannot go unchallenged.

Dooyeweerd (1894-1977) and his brother-in-law Vollenhoven (1892-1976) tried to develop a necessary Christian philosophy to justify the foundation and existence of the (Reformed) Free University of

Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Unfortunately, their overly static philosophical system never took common root in the Christian community.

Opposition developed not only among their own Reformed people, but also in the Dutch Reformed state church, which turned socialist after World War II because people realized that these philosophers had left the person in the street in the lurch during the depression years.

Spier to write a simplified version of their theories for the interested layperson — but in the end it was announced that even Rev. Spier had not understood it quite rightly, and the general public was still left in the dark;

* Vollenhoven himself, under severe stress and strain, suffered a mental breakdown;

* they didn't deal with modern geological, astronomical and biological problems.

Lacked expertise

Another significant sore point was that Vollenhoven, during the interlude of World War I, had developed a theory about the existence of *Christian* mathematics. He obtained his PhD on Sept. 27, 1918, with the thesis "The Philosophy of Mathematics from a Theistic Point of View." This academic promotion was one of the most unfortunate ever staged by the Free University. Vollenhoven, a theologian and philosopher, now entered a field in which he was not at ease. (The cobbler should not judge beyond the sandal.) Initially Vollenhoven worked together with the world-famous Dutch mathematician Luitzen Brouwer (1881-1967).

Brouwer's PhD thesis dated from 1907 and was titled: "About the Foundation of Math-

ematics," followed a year later by a publication called "About the Unreliability of Logical Principles." Brouwer is considered to be the systematic founder of modern intuitionism. In his opinion a meaningful statement does not have to be either true or false. There may be propositions which are neither provable nor unprovable (the existence of God!). Intuitionism may have brought Vollenhoven and Brouwer together, but at the end each man went his own and different way. (The mathematically trained reader may ask immediately how Vollenhoven and Brouwer would have dealt with the theory of modern statistics, chaos theory and the tendency in today's medicine to convert a healthy person with a risk factor into a patient who in fact doesn't need any treatment.)

Too complex for most

Vollenhoven created strong resistance among his first- and second-year science and theological students (the law students were taken care of by Dooyeweerd). I belonged to the category of science students. We repeatedly sent a delegation to Vollenhoven trying to explain that nobody understood the aim and purpose of his lectures —

but he refused to adjust to the needs of his audience.

By appointing Dr. H. van Riessen, a chief engineer from the Dutch PTT, to the chair of *studium generale* at the Technical University, Delft, this mistake was corrected. Van Riessen's lectures were immensely popular, as was his classic book *The Society of Tomorrow* — until he tackled the problems of apartheid in South Africa. At that time his students walked out on him.

Up till now the so-called *philosophy of law* has been singularly unproductive and its language has been unnecessarily complex. This should not be a condemnation, but a warning to all those people who take up the quarrel with the foe. We may then conclude that the Christian philosopher rides again — and not as a ghost-rider in the sky!

In the light of the above may I advise you not to characterize the opposition as "swine" or to imply that they are at most second-rank Christians? Let us instead heed the admonition of the Apostle: "...But in humility count others better than yourselves" (Phil.2:3).

**Bruce Bokhout
Don Mills, Ont.**



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Book Review

'Pilgrims' can still take comfort from Bunyan's classic

Pilgrim's Progress

by John Bunyan; as retold by Gary D. Schmidt; illustrated by Barry Moser. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1994. ISBN 0-8028-5080-4. 80 pp., hardcover. \$24.99 U.S. Reviewed by CC associate editor Marian Van Til.

If there's an older child or adult in your life to whom you'd like to give a book of lasting value, Gary Schmidt's re-telling of John Bunyan's 17th century allegory might be just the thing. Bunyan wrote his classic story in 1675 while imprisoned by the Church of England for his anti-establishment faith. The story is among the most enduringly popular and most often translated English-language works ever written.

The allegory encapsulates the Christian "pilgrim's" age-old struggle along the road to sanctification. The main character, in fact, is named "Christian" (and his wife, "Christiana"). Christian must journey from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City, all the while staying on the "narrow but right way," he is told by Evangelist. But alas, that is an arduous task. Christian encounters numerous potentially fatal pitfalls and obstacles, orchestrated by Apollyon (Satan) and his cohorts. Christian must find a way to

evade the fearful Slough of Despond, pass through the terrifying Valley of Humiliation, and escape the sepulchre-white

struct him, or even travel with him: Goodwill, Faithful, Shining Knight, Discretion, Charity, Hopeful, Knowledge and others.

Tightly interwoven

Bunyan's story takes the form of a dream dreamt by a narrator (perhaps himself in happier days) who relates the dream to his readers. In a "Farewell to the Reader," Bunyan asks him or her to "interpret" the dream, to throw away whatever dross they may find, but to "preserve the Gold."

The allegory is so straightforward that it has a childlike quality, which is particularly reinforced by Gary Schmidt's modernized retelling. (Schmidt teaches English at Calvin College.) Schmidt says his is "not another edition, nor...just *Pilgrim's Progress* with the language simplified or the lengthy discussions cut out. I have tried to stay close to Bunyan's original but I have attempted to tell his story to a contemporary audience — which is, after all, what he did."

Schmidt keeps the 17th century rural landscape (Christian, after all, walks his journey out of necessity; but walking also nicely fits the allegory).

Barry Moser's arresting colored illustrations maintain the characters' 17th century garb, too, with some subtle but purposeful exceptions. Chris-

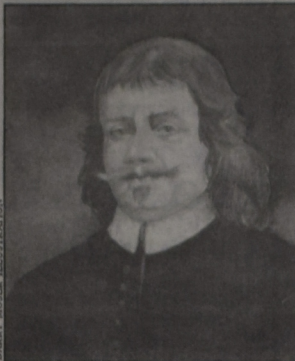
tian, for example, is dressed rather like a modern hiker with a baseball cap. His "burden" is a huge backpack which bends

looks like a Southern black preacher; Knowledge is a wizened old Chinese man; Ignorance reminds one of Mao or

a military dictator; Hopeful is reminiscent of a young black slave escaping to freedom on the Underground Railroad. All the illustrations add immensely to the impact of this beautiful edition.

Children of virtually any age will be drawn to it. For adults, it still offers spiritual

comfort as it has done for 320 years. If you've never read an uncut edition of *Pilgrim's Progress*, this edition may be the catalyst to draw you to the original. *Pilgrim's Progress* is undoubtedly the first English-language example of the kind of spiritual growth-oriented literature that is so popular among evangelical Christians today.



John Bunyan

"joys" of Vanity Fair, to name a few.

Christian meets other travellers on the way; many are themselves obstacles who tempt him to leave the Narrow But Right Way. In classic allegorical fashion, Bunyan makes these characters stand for various vices or post-Fall human conditions. Among others, there are Mr. Worldly-Wiseman, Despair, Hypocrisy, the pair Timorous and Mistrust, Pagan, Lord Hate-Good, Envy, Lucre, Mr. Facing-Both-Ways. But Christian also gets help on his journey, not only from Evangelist and the Roll (Scripture) Christian carries, but from others who wish him well, encourage him, in-



Christian climbs the hill to the cross.

him almost double. Yet he doesn't look out of place among the other characters. Moser's pictorial depiction of "Christian" maintains his universal character.

The racial diversity Moser's illustrations incorporate also makes perfect sense; it is out of place neither visually nor philosophically when joined with Bunyan's story. Evangelist

Exhibit 'worth a special trip to Amsterdam'

Marian Van Til

AMSTERDAM — A unique art exhibit began in Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum at the end of November and will continue through Feb. 26, 1994. Curator Henk van Os has grouped collected art works by function rather than by artist, period or theme. And that "function" is devotion. Each of these works depicting biblical themes and characters was created to act as "a source of inspiration and meditation to the monk, nun or lay person who knelt to pray in private," reports Lorraine M. Williams of *The Catholic Register*. These works were not hung in public, but may have rested on tables in cloister cells, or in laypeople's homes.

Williams says the shortness of the exhibit (a mere three months) was deliberate. Each winter the Rijksmuseum mounts one special exhibit geared toward special viewers, not large tours. "Now for the first time in centuries the viewer can experience the full impact that an original piece had on the medieval believer," she says.

A particularly striking example of the impact of such art is a polyptych whose four panels depicting the Annunciation and Christ's nativity, crucifixion and resurrection have, until now, remained separated since the Middle Ages. Galleries as far apart as Antwerp and Baltimore house the several pieces. Upon determining that the four panels belonged together, they were reunited for this exhibit. Upon first seeing the entire polyptych, the Antwerp and Baltimore curators "stood gazing in awe for two hours!" says Williams. She adds, "[The exhibit] is worth a special trip to Amsterdam."

Children's Book Review

Developing 'ears to hear'

God's Quiet Things

by Nancy Sweetland; illustrated by Rick Stevens. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1994. ISBN 0-8028-5082-0. Hardcover, 32 pp., \$15 U.S. Reviewed by CC associate editor Marian Van Til.

This little poetic gem — a story in verse — will help young children (and parents) stop and listen to some of the lovely, everyday things in God's creation. When kids learn to truly listen for "God's quiet things," they will also see. They will understand that such delights as "grasses waving in the breeze" or "butterflies with velvet wings" may be common,

but are by no means commonplace.

The pastel-shaded, impressionistic chalk drawings fit

hand-in-glove with the text. And the rhymed text is simple enough, and printed large enough, so that many children

aged four to seven will be able to read the book themselves.

This is an excellent choice not only for a child's/private library, but for church and Christian school libraries as well.



Church, Marian Van Til, page editor

Plans under way for Toronto's first 'MissionFest'

TORONTO (WECI) — Toronto, the largest multicultural city in the world, ought to be an ideal venue for the "MissionFest," a type of missions festival that has been taking North America by storm. (The Vancouver MissionFest welcomed over 30,000 in 1994, for example.) But two previous attempts at organizing a Toronto Festival foundered on a lack of local church support. This time, however, momentum seems to be building among Toronto churches. And Joe Elkerton

from First Nations Gospel Association has asked "that ethnic churches have real influence and participation in a Toronto festival."

As with other MissionFests this will be a free event running from a Friday to Sunday in mid-February 1996, with a wide variety of options for the whole family. Missions and evangelism will be the prime focus. Plenary sessions, seminars, information displays, youth rallies and children's programs will make up the festival.

Not just hype

Mark Orr from Student Mission Advance was the first to anticipate the momentum towards mission and outreach that seems to be building in the Toronto area. "With the Billy Graham Crusade in June '95 and then our own student conference in December '95, there may be a lot of people who have been challenged and are looking to do something practical in the way of outreach." It is likely that Franklin Graham, Billy Graham's son, will be a

main speaker.

Bill Pietje from Forward Baptist Church, Cambridge, Ont., is heading up a "Vision Team" of Christian leaders. "Our job will be to give direction, create focus and propose a vision statement" said Bill. "This will not be just another one-off, hype situation, but to see and experience in a practical sense the work of missions, so that we leave participants with something that they can do

right now."

The festival will be in the hands of Toronto congregations who are sending representatives to an executive committee. Churches who want to get involved in the planning are invited to contact MissionFest Toronto c/o WEC International at (905) 529-0166; Fax: (905) 529-0630; e-mail: philip.wood@f317.n244.zl.fidonet.org.

Catholics told to work for unity with other denominations

PRAGUE, Czechoslovakia (EP) — Roman Catholic Church leaders should work for "unity and collegiality" with other Christian confessions in Europe, according to Roman Catholic Archbishop Miloslav Vlk of Prague.

In an interview with Ecumenical News International, Vlk indicated that he had seen a continuing co-operation between Roman Catholic and mainline Protestant churches in Europe, but that Catholic churches ought to work through

contacts with international organizations such as the Conference of European Churches (CEC).

Vlk, the president of the Council of European (Roman Catholic) Bishops' Conferences, said that the Roman Catholic Church had moved closer to the traditional Protestant churches in the past 50 years and that all churches should strive to work together. "We all clearly sense the need for community — for going forward together," said Vlk.

"All churches are aware that we must offer our testimony of faith together — that without unity, it will not be trusted," added Vlk. "Christ said the world would believe us only if we were united in love for each other."

He concluded: "We have to assert the principles of unity and collegiality internationally, by learning about each other, talking and praying together, and expressing the love which joins us through a mutual exchange of gifts."

Wisemen's descendants discover Christ

BAGHDAD, Iraq (EP) — The "Wisemen" who came to visit the infant Jesus believed that their Savior had come. Tradition holds that the men were Medes, ancestors of today's Kurds. Today Kurds are finding out about their Savior through the showing of the "Jesus" film. The Kurds, as a people, have suffered greatly

since 1987, when Iraq's Republican Guard began its campaign to completely annihilate the Kurds in northern Iraq. Today, it is only the United Nations-imposed "no-fly" zone over northern Iraq that prevents the murder of millions of Kurds who survived the genocidal campaign. According to Campus Crusade for Christ, many of

the group once known as the "most Moslem of all Moslems" are now disillusioned with Islam and are searching for new religious ideals. "Jesus" film teams are working with the Kurds inside Iraq. As many as 500 Moslems may see the film in many countries, although in restricted countries, like Iraq, smaller showings may be held secretly in homes. Based on reports given to Campus Crusade, as many as 10 per cent of each crowd will express a desire to follow Christ.

You can examine the Dead Sea scrolls

OAK HARBOR, Wash. (EP) — Even the folks who once dismissed television as a "vast wasteland" may be surprised to learn that one product for the newest technological craze — CD-ROM — is being shipped with a vial of actual desert sand.

Logos Research Systems is including a vial of sand excavated at Kirbat Qumran, the archaeological site adjacent to the Dead Sea and the caves where the Dead Sea scrolls were found, with the first 10,000 boxes of its new interactive CD-ROM product, "The Dead Sea Scrolls Revealed."

The disk, available for both Macintosh and Windows, includes photos of all major scrolls and fragments, hundreds of historical photos and illustrations, English translations of the scrolls, with commentary and additional text written just for this project, and two hours of video interviews and historical footage, including 70 minutes of newly produced video.

The project was authorized by the Israel Antiquities Authority, curators of the scrolls. It will permit a general audience to explore the exquisitely detailed lettering of the ancient Hebrew texts in high-quality, high-resolution images, while reading translations in English.

All churches now equal in Poland

WARSAW, Poland (EP) — A new law to regulate church-state relations between several church denominations and the Republic of Poland will establish freedom of religion and separation of church and state in that nation. An agreement

signed last year between the Vatican and the Republic threw the country's church-state relations with minority religions in turmoil, but the latest move will provide equality of all religions before the law.

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ENERGY FACTS

Nuclear technology is one of only two industries in which Canada is a net exporter of high technology goods and services. Each year the nuclear industry typically produces a trade surplus for Canada of about \$500 million, and the aerospace industry produces an average of about \$900 million. In all other high-tech categories, from computers to pharmaceuticals to telecommunications, Canada imports more than it exports.

NC

Divine interruption offers rest and challenge

"We observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage" (Matt. 2:2).

I've been spending quite a bit of time of late on a computer bulletin board devoted to discussions of books and reading. Everyone who participates in this bulletin board reads voraciously, and the discussions are always provocative and worthwhile.

Recently, in the context of a discussion about what we look for in a piece of fiction, one woman commented, "I want a book which interrupts my life." The other readers in this discussion immediately understood what she meant, and this standard has now been accepted by the group and is used to determine which books we recommend to each other. "Here's a book which interrupted my life," we say. These are the books which have left their imprint on us, the books we use to make sense of our experience, the books which become part of our system of thinking.

Epiphany is about such inter-

rupting of life as we know it. An epiphany moment is one in which you are changed forever, a moment which interrupts your life with a radical piece of information which forever colors the way you view the world.

Endless journey stops

In W.H. Auden's poetic drama *For the Time Being*, he portrays the shepherds and the wisemen as arriving at the manger together. The two groups of worshippers share how it is that they have come to this place. The wisemen speak first:

*Led by the light of an unusual star,
We hunted high and low. Have travelled far,
For many days, a little group alone
With doubts, reproaches, boredom, the unknown.
Through stifling gorges, over level lakes,
Tundras intense and irresponsible seas.
In vacant crowds and humming silences,*

*By ruined arches and past modern shops,
Counting the miles, and the absurd mistakes.
O here and now our endless journey stops.*

Later, the wisemen confess to their "arrogant longing to attain the tomb... to have no past" and to their "lives' impatience" and "exceptional conceit." Their life has been a series of interruptions, never allowing them any rest or contentment. God has been continually prodding them on the journey, until now they have come to the rest of worshipping the Christ.

Dull routine

The shepherds have travelled a different road:

*We never left the place where we were born,
Have only lived one day, but every day,
Have walked a thousand miles yet only worn
The grass between our work and home away.
Lonely we were though never left alone.*

*The solitude familiar to the poor
Is feeling that the family next door,
The way it talks, eats, dresses, loved, and hates,
Is indistinguishable from one's own.
Tonight for the first time the prison gates
Have opened. Music and sudden light
Have interrupted our routine tonight,
And swept the filth of habit from our hearts.
O here and now our endless journey starts.*

They confess to their "sullen wish to go back to the womb," "to have... no past," and to their "lives' laziness" and "average fear." It is the routine of their lives that brought them to the field at night and an encounter with "music and sudden light" erupting into the stillness and catapulting them into a new way of life.

A necessary message

Both wisemen and shepherds have experienced *epiphany*. The coming of Christ has been revealed to them, made manifest in a startling way which interrupts their lives and changes them forever. The revelation has been customized, sending to each group the necessary message. They say to

each other: "Love has used/Our weakness as a guard and guide."

Most of us share traits with both the shepherds and the wise men. There are ways in which we are perpetually dissatisfied, searching for something more, drawn to the innovative and the exotic. Christ answers that restlessness, so that our searching stops when we rest in him. There are ways in which we are lazy creatures of habit, rarely stirring out of a particular routine or pattern of thought. Christ comes, with "music and sudden light," to interrupt our routine and send us on a journey which will not end until we see him face to face.

Laura Smit is pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Clayton, N.J.



Laura Smit

CHAPTER

&

VERSE

Nepalese Christians optimistic communist victory won't erode liberty

Andrew Wark

HONG KONG (NNI) — Christian leaders are optimistic that religious liberty will not decline in the mountain kingdom of Nepal, despite the formation of a new communist-led government in late November.

While many nations have retreated from communist systems in recent years, the Communist coalition (CPN/UML) captured 88 seats in the 205-seat House of Representatives during November national elections.

The CPN/UML unseated the ruling Nepali Congress party of Prime Minister G.P. Koirala to form its own minority government. Analysts say the win is largely due to the infighting within the Nepali Congress prior to the election, which steadily eroded the former ruling party's power base.

Christian leaders say the CPN/UML took a "neutral" stand on religion throughout the campaign. That gives Christians hope that their newly realized religious freedoms will be

upheld under the new government.

"Nepal's Communist Party is quite different than those in other parts of the world," says the leader of Katmandu's Gameswar Christian Church, Pastor Robert Karthak, because "atheism is not a requirement." In fact, many top leaders of the CPN/UML are Hindus.

Another Christian leader, who asked not to be identified, says he believes religious liberty may even improve under a CPN/UML government. "The new leaders don't owe a debt of gratitude to any one religion, which I think is good," the leader told NNI. "I think [the new government] will be very careful to 'walk down the middle of the road' and try to maintain a very impartial attitude toward religion."

Proselytizing Hindus technically illegal

Non-Hindu religions have only experienced religious liberty since 1990, when civil unrest led to democratic re-

forms and a dismantling of the 30-year, Hindu-controlled autocratic Panchayat system. Although Nepal is the world's last Hindu kingdom, Christians say that since 1990, they have essentially been free to conduct church activities without government interference.

Meanwhile, church sources in Katmandu say there have been no new developments in the case involving 11 Christians being held in custody in eastern Nepal. The 10 Bhutanese refugees and one Nepali were arrested and detained in early September for allegedly evangelizing Hindus. According to a 1992 law, Nepalis are free to change their religion, but evangelism among Hindus is still technically illegal.

Katmandu church leaders have expressed ongoing concern for the Christians in custody, but say the incident cannot be taken as an indication that Nepali authorities are now taking a stronger stand against Christian evangelism.

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Feature

It pays to have a wise daughter

My five-week stay in Russia (1)



The author relaxes with his daughter, Timah.

Aren Geisterfer

This past summer I had the privilege of visiting Russia for about five weeks. My daughter, Timah, and her husband, Charles, have been living in Moscow for the past two and a half years.

During my trip I did not make use of the comforts of Western hotels, Western cars or anything foreign to Russian life, except for a few small things I had taken along.

My daughter had advised me to travel "as a Russian," though I was not one. I had to wear the unusual garb of dark pants and also dark, long-sleeve shirts, while I had to put on a somewhat depressed facial expression on my usual hairy countenance. According to some younger Russians I was the look-alike of an older Ivan.

Furthermore, my dear daughter asked me not to carry my camera around my neck, but in a big colorful, plastic bag. Many Russians walk around with such bags. Timah also advised me not to stop and look around too much, but to take in as much as possible while walking. I should look down or stare ahead of me, she said, rather than look curiously around.

Once I was travelling, meeting Russians in their own setting, I discovered, much to my delight, that it worked! People appreciated the fact that I did not stand out as a rich Westerner, but that I travelled

quietly like many of the Russians themselves, sober and a bit withdrawn. Indeed most Russians, especially older people, are very reserved and seldom talk in public.

Karl Marx look-alike

Quite often I was looked upon as a Russian. When Timah took a picture of me at the foot of the huge Karl Marx statue in front of the Bolshoi theatre, a Russian intellectual walked up to me. As he was looking at me, shaking his head, he started, "Sir, you look like Karl Marx. May I suggest you cut off your beard and your hair, for people here don't like him anymore!"

Timah joked, "There's no problem with doing that, but what about his ideas? My dad can't keep quiet! A big smile appeared on the face of my Russian admirer.

Once in a while a young Russian wanted a match from me to light a cigarette. I could not help but laugh. All what I could mutter was something like "Nyet."

Only when Timah started to speak did the Russians around us sense that we were not one of them. It was hard for me not to talk, for I had a hundred and one questions I wanted to ask my Russian hosts about their world — what they thought of the West and their views on the new situation. But I had to wait!

Going back to the day when I arrived at Moscow's

Sheremetyevo airport, I sensed that I was entering a totally different world. As we came into the terminal building Russian soldiers were stationed some 20 metres apart. At first it gave me an eerie feeling. I felt intimidated, but after a careful look at each of the uniformed soldiers as I walked by them, I sensed that it was not so serious. What I saw under these new military caps were faces of young men. Each face bespoke of inexperience, and their mostly blue eyes betrayed a great measure of naïveté.

By the time I had arrived at customs I felt at ease as I continued to study my new Russian surroundings. It was a strange experience I was undergoing. I was in the heart of the former Soviet Union, or in Ronald Reagan's words "the Evil empire!" Was it still like that?

Calvinist guilt

At customs there were the usual two kinds of exits: one for declaring anything of value, the other for those who have nothing to declare. As a good Calvinist I hesitated about which of the two to take. With a beating heart I approached the one exit to declare my contraband goods, though I did not know the nature of my illegal commodities yet!

My daughter had advised me to seek out a male custom official because females were much more aggressive. I had to smile when she communicated this over the telephone. She used to be a feminist. Things can change...not only in Russia!

Timah also had told me to stand behind someone with lots of luggage. "Dad, the officials like to take it easy after a big job. Most likely he will let you through without too much trouble." I took her advice. I found a new arrival who had more than the average baggage. It was unbelievable the amount of boxes, suitcases and bags this father and son had.

Waiting for my hour to be interrogated by the KGB, I watched in horror what took place in front of me. Each suitcase, box and weekend bag was opened up.

The custom official searched thoroughly for anything illegal brought into Mother Russia. With dismay I looked at my own three heavy-laden travel bags. I had 10 little locks to

secure all the zippers, as Timah had advised me. She had warned me about would-be thieves.

I had also wrapped each bag with tough, yellow camping cord. It would take me at least 20 minutes to open all of them! Though I kept on praying for God to change the heart of the custom official when my turn came, I started to check out which key fit which lock.

In the meantime almost half an hour had passed.

He smiled at me

Suddenly it was my turn to allow the customs official to search me and see whether any unrighteousness could be found in — or on — me. I had already opened one of my bags when the young official looked at me with a faint smile. In my anxiety I could not detect whether it was from the devil or from kindness itself. He took my papers, opened my passport, saw my terrible picture inside it and glanced at me to see whether I was a fraud trying to deceive him, or a poor old father visiting his beloved imprisoned in Moscow.

Again he smiled at me while he looked over my three pieces of luggage. Then he wrote something on my papers, put

the much coveted stamp of approval on them and returned them to me. He did not look at my luggage. I instantly felt a horrible load of guilt and anxiety lift from me.

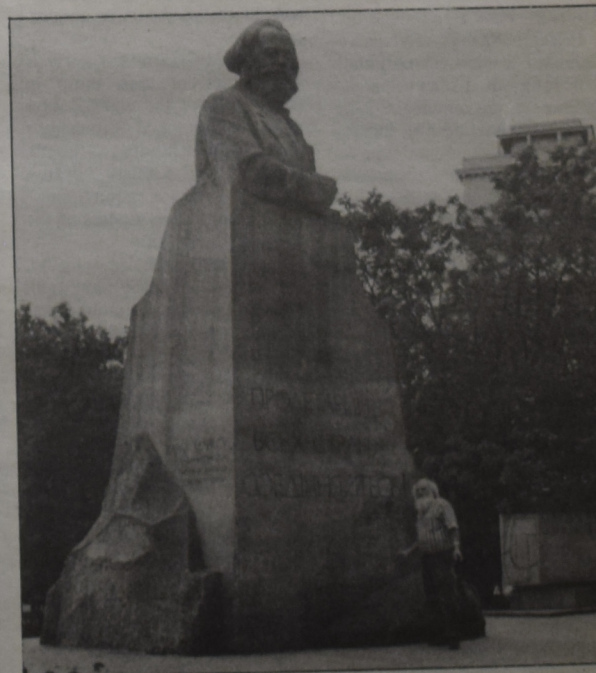
The official said something nice too, but I was too confused to translate his Russian into my own English. It had taken less than 30 seconds. It is a boon to have a wise daughter in Russia!

Moments later I crossed from the customs hall into the wide open space outside the military-like surroundings, where I buried my now smiling face in my daughter's arms. Timah and Charles warmly welcomed me.

They had taken their friend Valery along because he had a car. Well, in Western terms, it looked like a mini Lada, and I wondered how the four of us could fit into that "lawnmower." With some effort we stuffed ourselves in, though most of my luggage was too big for the trunk. So the four of us merrily drove off with three pieces of my luggage on the roof of the car.

Look for Part 2 of this four-part series next week.

Aren Geisterfer is the Christian Reformed chaplain at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ont.



Karl Marx monument, with a Marx lookalike, in front of the Bolshoi in Moscow.

Feature

'This is not capitalism at its finest' — and we Christians bear some blame

Caught in the Middle: Christians in Transnational Corporations

The Church and the External Debt

Both edited by Jan H. Boer, 222 pp. and 219 pp., both published in 1992 by the Institute of Church and Society, Nigeria, and distributed by the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto. \$12.00 each. Reviewed by Robert Vander Vennen, editor of ICS Perspective and CC Toronto-area regional reporter

A few years ago a transnational corporation bought 8,000 acres in the Philippines to establish a pineapple plantation. The peasants who farmed the land received compensation but were unable to adjust to farming on the new land, and the money ran out. Hunger and despair drove the farmers to a nearby city where they joined the throngs of unskilled and unemployed peasants.

A North American church has a mission outreach program in that city. It is an expensive program but it has helped some of the peasants get a new start. However, members of the same denomination that runs the mission invest in that transnational corporation, and so does the church itself, through its pension fund. The cycle is a tragic one, and something must be done.

This important book by Rev. John Boer, a Christian Reformed missionary in Nigeria is a wake-up call.

Ignorance of injustice

Few of us ever think about these things, nor do we know how interconnected these corporations are (made concrete in a short case study of the Exxon Corporation), each owning stock in many of their competitors. Boer calls them "the happy family." This is not capitalism at its finest.

"Not all transnational corporations are bad, and I'm not saying there is nothing useful about any of them," says Boer. But then he shows us how in poor countries such corpora-

tions squeeze out local farmers and small businesses, foster cash crops like pineapples in place of food for local people, and subject babies to sickness and death with pre-packaged infant formula in place of their mother's milk.

We and our churches should not invest in these companies, says Boer. Our religion is not limited to the inner self, but embraces the cultural mandate which says we have responsibility for all the earth, since our Lord claims kingship of it all.

Boer has made a study of attitudes and practices of the Christian Reformed Church and its members. They show a good concern for ethical practice in corporations, but ignorance and insensitivity about what is happening inside those corporations. Boer says the CRC and its members invest blindly in these corporations, and don't have much concern because they vaguely believe that the



A father and son rest in a traditional market place in Nigeria



Youth in Lagos, Nigeria carries his shop of glasses and other modern goods on his head

companies have largely beneficial effects.

His conclusion is blunt: "I judge the CRC and [its] constituency to be highly irresponsible. In the area of financial stewardship all the main doctrines of the church are ignored, neglected, bypassed."

Profit top priority

Boer says the problem is the "priority of profit." Company executives want to squeeze the highest possible return on investment; too bad if there are negative consequences. All of us, too, want the very highest return on our investments; we don't nurture a sense of service or find out whether a company helps poor people in its operations in poor countries. "We should divest from almost all [currently] existing corporations," says Boer. The capitalism these companies practice may be pretty good, but "it is not good enough for Christians," he insists.

It's easy to criticize, of course, but we're not even talking about taking action, laments Boer. We need study groups to inform ourselves, and we need to join with Christians to set up businesses that help the poor people in countries like Nigeria.

A problem of our making

The second book here, this one the result of a conference

held in Nigeria, is an urgent cry for relief from oppression. Most poor countries — nearly all of them located in the southern hemisphere — have staggering external debts owed to banks in industrialized countries. Even to keep up payments on the interest the countries squeeze their poor people in basic health services, education and adequate food.

This is a great moral problem, so churches need to address it. As money is devalued, inflation and unemployment rise, and so do crime and political instability. "The external debt is the major cause of impoverishment of the masses," said Rev. Luther Cishak at the conference.

The problem is only about 20 years old. Heads of poor nations borrowed to develop their country, some projects were mismanaged white elephants, and very often unscrupulous dictators simply took the money and put it into their private bank accounts in other countries. Almost none of the money benefitted the nation, and the poor who must pay it back have not seen any rewards.

External debt is now a crisis in these countries, says Boer. Loans offered by banks with too much money brought in by high oil revenues now carry much higher interest rates. The poor countries complain that this financial colonialism is much worse than the colonialism of

decades ago.

Solutions are not easy. In a very long chapter Boer discusses the helpful 15-point recommendations by Canadian churches through their Taskforce on Churches and Corporate Responsibility. He also commends work done by the United Methodist Church in the United States.

Materialism dominates

The root of the problem, said a Muslim participant, is "... the emerging dominance of materialism over spirituality." A Roman Catholic participant asserted, "Most Catholics, be they in the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank, do not tend to relate their experiences with their religious beliefs." It's hard to find a religious group to which that does not apply.

This is an important book. Its message should be widely heard and understood. This book can serve as a good introduction to a work on the same subject by Dutch Christian economists Bob Goudzwaard and Harry de Lange, recently published by Eerdmans with a special Canadian edition soon to be released by the University of Toronto Press.

We get a feel for the underdeveloped culture of a country like Nigeria though in the printing and binding of these books, which are not up to North American standards.

Opinion

Christian schools, the CLAC and a new model

Parents' 'prior right' in education is a misconception

Adrian Peetoom

My enduring interest in matters educational made me sit up when I read about the decisions of at least two groups of Christian school teachers to form a CLAC local. Based on my own experiences, Bert Witvoet's editorial rang true (CC, Dec. 9, 1994: "CLAC okay, but not in my backyard"). The labor union route is one possible response to professional frustration; leaving Christian schools is another (I have met plenty of examples in my career as educational publisher); leaving the teaching profession is yet another. The question is: What are the sources of frustration? What's the problem here?

I'm sure that the two groups of teachers have a pregnant list of items when they encountered what appeared to be inflexible and slow school boards who plead that parents can't pay more. However, in my view the problem goes deeper than that. The Reformed (OACS) Christian school movement is coming face to face with the consequences of a long-standing misconception. That misconception is the unarticulated (and often unexamined) assertion that parents have a "prior right" in the schooling of their children.

That assertion is represented in schools that call themselves "parental," but is not limited to them. Christian school supporters often quote the relevant article from the United Nations charter, and are amazed that signatories of that charter (like Canada) seem to ignore it so readily when asked for financial justice for parental schools.

Before I challenge that misconception, let me say that I wholeheartedly agree that parents should have "the right..." (a) to choose the type of education their children require, and (b) [the state should] give parents the opportunity to form schools to provide such education" (See CPJ's *Guidelines for Christian Political Service*, p.3). In the education of my own children I always made use of (a); and for almost 20 years I have diligently worked at (b). I am not now, nor have I ever been, an advocate of a single (public) school system. Moreover, I strongly believe that parents have vital roles to play in education, politically, socially, and even pedagogically (see footnote 1).

Partnership between equals

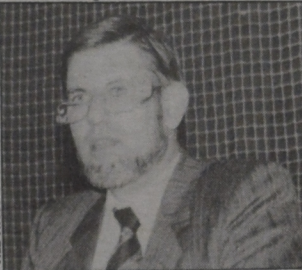
My problem has always been the singular emphasis on "parent's prior right," which so often has come to mean that whatever parents wish in the schools of their children, must be. For me, schools ought to be a partnership between at least three equals: parents, educators and society at large (in former times represented by the church, now by the state).

The three are equal in their right to be acknowledged and recognized, but are not equal in what they bring to a school. In fact, each one represents a distinct vital interest whose integrity must be safeguarded by the other two.

Society at large has a right to insist that schools educate children into responsible service, into mature adults who are

willing and able to serve the various needs of their fellow human beings.

Parents have a right to insist that schools do not challenge basic parental values on vital ("view of life") issues, resulting in children being forced to make impossible choices be-



Adrian Peetoom

tween "what the teacher says" and "what my parents say."

Educators have a right to insist that their insights and experiences in matters curriculum and instructional are respected and given room.

The many well-run schools (public, Catholic Christian, other Christian, private) I have known in my long career as an educational publisher exhibits such positive trusting partnership between these three. For instance, educators feel free to interpret Ministry of Education guidelines, welcome parental communication and shared, specific problem-solving; parents trust the school and honor the skills and insights of teachers; governments support individual schools with advice, guidelines and finances but are happy not to interfere in their day-to-day operation. Each of the three partners is accountable to the other two in many complex and subtle ways, yet partners recognize each other's irreducible worth and "right." None lords it over the other two.

Historical explanations

But doesn't the article in the United Nations charter contradict such a "troika" stance by drawing attention to "parent's rights"? Certainly not. The charter was formulated shortly after World War II, with strong memories to the damages caused by the fascist totalitarian state that had bent parents and teachers to its will. We must read that article in the face of such an immediate past, and not read into it what Christian school supporters anxious for

financial support seem to be reading into it: automatic financial support for their parental priority in Canadian education.

But why would those parents read their own views into the words of that charter? That, too, has a history. The Dutch immigrant parents who founded Canadian Christian schools in the 1950s and '60s drew on their own memories of a long school struggle (Schoolstrijd) going back to the early 19th century. Their forebears had experienced the Dutch state's lording it over schools with a curriculum deeply offensive to the religious sensitivities of many parents. That school struggle had shaped their forebears' views, not only educational views, but also political, social, economic, cultural views, and it shaped their own views. Those views had come to be bundled together into a Reformed consciousness (subculture) that was still clearly visible by the time they left the Netherlands for Canada in the 1940s and 1950s. In fact, for many immigrants life without Christian schools was unthinkable. Hence they set out to establish them in Canada with the same urgency, and only just behind the time they established "their own" churches.

How rhetoric became practice

Fortunately, while the rhetoric of *parent's prior right* was kept in place, the practice of most schools these parents themselves had attended exhibited the equal rights model I already mentioned. For instance, I wrote state examinations at the end of my Dutch high school days, and those exams were the same for every secondary school of whatever kind. And my parents wouldn't ever have challenged the expertise of teachers. Moreover, I know that the *parent's prior right* model is no longer shared even by Christian school supporters in the Netherlands.

But Christian Reformed schools in Canada (OACS schools in Ontario) have been different up till now, the way I see it. While the practices of many Christian schools exhibit the contours of the partnership I talked about, when those schools begin to experience tensions, the *parent's prior right* model is quickly resurrected.

And when are tensions usually experienced? When staffs propose changes, when new insights about curricular and pedagogical matters require changes in school organization, facilities, supplies, learning materials, financial priorities, staffing, accountability, reporting to parents, etc. Soon (or so is my experience) the "debate" is not about merits of the proposals but about *parent's prior right*.

Unfortunately most parents are not, will not, and perhaps cannot become knowledgeable enough to offer valid opinions about the proposals offered. Feeling helpless, they fall back on the concept of *parent's prior right*. So it's not the merits that will be discussed, but the budget, and the pressures on the board, which is elected by, and therefore ultimately responsible to, the parents.

Time to retire the wrong model

It is my guess that Christian school teachers feel that they can no longer endure being held back. As the world has changed rapidly over the last two decades, so has education, and therefore, teaching. Old pedagogical approaches have been shown not to work in our days, and they may not have worked as well as we thought in the past anyway. Pressures mount to change. Schools can no longer let parents have the *prior right*.

It's time to build a new model of partnership. I speculate that the teachers in question have bent over backwards, and have shown patience to a fault, so as not to occasion a conflict. Their choice of the CLAC route I interpret as a loving act in desperate circumstances. I applaud them.

This "conflict" is not one of personalities clashing or of certain people wanting their own way; and the solution is not a "win" for either side.

The problem is a wrong model of education that has long plagued Christian schools. It is time to address the real problem and alter the model. It's time to begin thinking about schools in new ways.

Adrian Peetoom lives in Waterloo, Ont., where he has been studying theology since his retirement from publishing educational material.

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Sports/News

Professional sports: striking out?

Andrew Pols and J.D. Alkema

North America's two favorite pastimes have been suspended since August 12. This occurrence brings the realization that life goes on without professional sports. This is not to say that sport cannot be a part of our life, though this down-time may be a good time to re-evaluate to which level we have elevated professional sports.

We would be the first to admit that through the work stoppages we have seen that professional sports does not play as large of a role in our lives as once thought. Sure we missed the fall classic, the hype and the excitement which surrounds it, and we miss the

promise of a new hockey season.

But right at this moment professional hockey and baseball are only in the back of our minds and come up only occasionally in our conversations. Because of this absence, other issues and concerns are now brought to the forefront of our conversations.

The game and the business

We think people enjoy professional sport because it gives them a break from reality. Professional athletes are given skills we will never have, and we enjoy watching them at that high level.

Essentially we feel there are two kinds of sport viewers. Those that watch the game for the love of the game (some may even live out their dreams through the players). A second viewer is one that sees professional sport only as big business. The strike and lock-out of these sports has brought to our attention how commercialized and money-oriented professional baseball and hockey are especially as viewed by owners and players.

The media is our eyes into the world of professional sports, and reporters accentuate the squabbles or discontent which are centred around money. Rather than focusing on the es-

sence of the game, reporters choose to focus on the politics of sport. When we have both aspects we tolerate the business and politics. However, since we have lost the game, the sport has lost its appeal.

It's in the playing

It would be unrealistic to think that we can have the sport without the business and politics, but the game should be the paramount focus. If professional sports does not focus on the game, it may result in its demise; fans will eventually be turned off.

Not only for the preservation of professional sports should the playing of the game be the

focus, but because the playing of the game is the area of the sport that pleases God. The greed and power which is so often related to the business side of the sport is not good stewardship. These athletes have unique gifts in performing the game, which is really what we enjoy about the sport. As Christians we must realize these gifts come from God and discourage their abuse.

Andrew Pols and J.D. Alkema are students at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Both have a strong interest in sport and wanted to share their thoughts.

Relief through empowerment best, nurse discovers

Jim Romahn

CALGARY, Alta. — "I still don't know why I did it. I just heard there was a need and I saw a great opportunity to serve," says Greta deGroot, a Calgary nurse, wife and mother of three teenagers who dropped everything to fly to Rwanda the last day of October.

She spent five and a half weeks there, scouting Kigali, the nation's capital, working with Food For the Hungry International (FHI). After performing a needs assessment — i.e. looking around to see what needed doing — she initiated a community assistance program for foster children and vulnerable families in Gitega, one of the city's poorest geographic regions.

She has returned to Canada with a head full of stories and a heart full of grief. "I'm beginning to have dreams about it," she says of her experience. "Every woman had a story to tell. So much suffering. So much grief. Although it affected me at the time, I am only now beginning to deal with the emotional impact."

Sensitive to needs

Recognizing that many relief agencies were already working in Kigali, Greta decided to approach the mayor for help in identifying the most pressing needs. She stood in line for hours, but when she finally got in to see Major Rose, she found a woman who is patient, understanding and burdened with tremendous challenges.

"I shared with her FHI's vision of a foster parenting program for children who have been abandoned and that I had identified Gitega as the place to

approach that the CRWRC took in seeking partners rather than going in alone "is typical of the way we do things. We put a big emphasis on being collabora-



Stampeding in terror, Rwandan refugees flee after mortar fire lands near them in Zaire.

begin," deGroot says. "She told me to 'go to it!' And she shared with me that it is a bit of a problem that so many aid agencies have moved in without any overall plan or co-ordination.

"It's amazing to me. The local people must wonder what all these agencies and people are doing, and why they've simply moved in and taken over. International relief workers must be sensitive to the ways and needs of communities in which they work."

Ray Elgersma, director of the CRWRC of Canada, says deGroot's experience, and the

tive, of working with other Christian denominations wherever we can."

Orphanages too popular

deGroot says "orphanages are popular in Rwanda. And they have been receiving generous support from the world-wide community. As a result they are able to provide good meals, clean clothing and have volunteers from around the world to provide good care. The down side is that some parents see orphanages as a better alternative for their children. Mothers knock on the gates

daily, begging the staff to take their children. Others have simply abandoned children, knowing that they will be taken to an orphanage."

deGroot believes children are better being raised in a family, so she started a foster parenting program. She worked within the philosophical framework of Food For the Hungry International, which created the ChildWins program to empower families to maintain family unity within the child's own cultural context. The family unit is encouraged to work toward self-sufficiency.

Resilient women

By the time she left Kigali in early December, she had identified 120 families at risk. Many are poor because Gitega is little better than a slum. And that's where FHI comes into the picture — providing the support these women, the primary caregivers, require to do a proper job. Food is one of the obvious measures of support. Another is information, training and advice.

"We distributed food, blankets, clothes and jerrycans to the care givers of foster children. This assistance enabled families to continue their care for abandoned children," deGroot says.

"I was encouraged by the emotional strength and resilience of the Rwandan women," she says. "These women have suffered such pain and brokenness, yet they are

working to hold families together and to bring healing to the people."

The staff deGroot was able to assemble included a nurse and a social worker. "By the time I left, I was confident these people would soon be able to take over the program and run it themselves," she said.

More to nursing

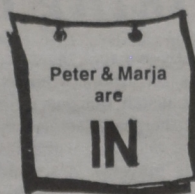
deGroot barely landed back in Calgary before she found a new job as a nurse. Her husband, Rudy, is an English teacher at Calgary Christian School and the family are members of Emmanuel Christian Reformed Church in Calgary.

The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee initiated and sponsored deGroot's work with FHI in Rwanda. "It is the CRWRC's vision to share Christ's love with those in need that has always been close to my heart," says deGroot.

"Prior to leaving for Rwanda, I had visions of spending my days treating dehydrated infants, setting up intravenous systems," deGroot says. "I took my stethoscope along, but I never used it. Not once. I hung it over my bed, over the mosquito netting, and I used to look at it at night and think 'Nursing is broader than treating the body; it is enriching the life of the whole person.'

"It turned out to be not at all like I thought it would be. But it was exciting and worthwhile. I know the Lord used me to make a difference."

Advice



What is a called pastor's responsibility?

Dear P & M:

I am a member of a healthy, but pastor-less congregation. Through prayer we have selected a calling committee, which spends hours looking for a pastor.

Some of the ministers contacted during the preliminary process have stated at the outset that they would not let their name stand. We have appreciated their forthrightness and honesty. Other pastors, though, have in a sense "strung us along" and raised our hopes. Rather than saying, within a reasonable amount of time, that they would not consider the call, they have come to special social evenings at our church, chatted with members, seriously examined the workings of our church, and generally given us the idea that they would seriously consider the call. Then our hearts are broken when they decline.

It's not so much that they decline, even after all this socializing and consideration, but that they don't tell us why! I think if they find something offensive about our church they have the responsibility to tell us.

I don't doubt that God will send us the shepherd of his choosing when the time is right. But I think it is almost cruel for a pastor to raise our hopes, perhaps knowing beforehand that he would decline the call. This process leaves the calling committee and the congregation disheartened.

Why do pastors who receive a call, especially if they have decided at the outset not to accept the call, put the calling congregation through this trial? Please don't tell me that they must search and seek God's will in these matters. In my own experience such an answer is not truthful. I am usually very capable of knowing God's will quickly. If I do have to pray about something my answer comes quickly and those who ask me to do something for them are informed of the reasons for my decision.

What is the called pastor's responsibility to the congregation? Does he have any right to raise our hopes? Please pray for congregations such as ours who have been turned down numerous times. Also, let us know what we might be doing wrong.

Dear Dashed Hopes:

The typical question asked by calling committees sounds like this: "Is there anything that would prevent you from considering a call at this time?" Some pastors immediately know that they are not free to leave and they stop the process at this initial stage. Other pastors find themselves, for various reasons, unable to give a clear No to this inquiry. So they open themselves up to the possibility that the Lord may want to serve elsewhere.

By allowing their name to stand they enter an information seeking process which leaves both parties entirely free. Such pastors experience it as opening the

door a crack to the possibility of an eventual move. They make no promise about which call, if any, they'll accept. Letting one's name stand only means that a person is open to the idea that there may be a move somewhere, sometime in the future.

If and when this process leads to an actual call, the pastor has three weeks to look at two fields of ministry: his present placement and the new calling church. A pastor with integrity will seriously and prayerfully consider how he can use his gifts to meet the needs in both places. He knows his current situation inside and out; he knows next to nothing about the calling congregation. That's why he needs to meet with church leaders and members.

This is not merely a social time, although everyone will be putting their best foot forward. It's a time to get information and form impressions. The wise pastor will not make any comment that raises false hopes. Instead, he will carefully inform himself so that he is equipped to weigh the two calls against each other.

From personal experience we know that this is a very difficult time for the pastor and his family. His spouse and children will have opinions. His congregation will send him various signals. Letters and phone calls will come daily from members of the calling church.

Accepting a new challenge and move is a huge decision with many implications for many people. That's why synod stipulates that the pastor has at least three weeks to think it through. You can be sure that these three weeks are a restless, agonizing time. When the final decision comes it brings a great sense of relief followed by the difficult task of disappointing one of the two parties.

A letter of decline does not need to go into great detail. But you remind us that a pastor must be sensitive to the feelings of the congregation which gets the decline. Some insight and explanation will help avoid the feeling of rejection that fuels your frustration.

What should members of calling churches do? Develop a clear concept of ministry and have a good handle on the strengths and weaknesses and needs of the congregation. Research prospects thoroughly with the help of the Ministerial Information Service (CRC) or some similar service depending on the denomination. Give the pastor the freedom to stay or go where the need is the greatest and the Lord is calling him. And set aside the skeptical assumption that many pastors know in advance what their answer will be and simply string churches along.

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Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont.

Discerning God's will is an art

Last spring Gordon Legge, our Calgary correspondent, spent a couple of hours talking with Rev. Thomas Green and Gordon Smith at a retreat centre near Calgary. The two theologians and authors were conducting a workshop entitled "Divine guidance and spiritual discernment." Green is a Roman Catholic Jesuit priest and professor and Smith is vice-president at a Protestant seminary.

Here are some snippets of the discussion Legge had with the two professors when he asked them how one can discern God's will for any given time.

Gordon Legge

"The art of discernment is the simple practice of listening to God — something that must be learned — but something that any willing Christian can come to," says Smith.

"But the heart of discerning is the simple task of knowing, loving and serving Jesus Christ, while being more attentive to the prompting of the Spirit in our own hearts and minds."

Consolation and desolation

The starting point is to realize that God speaks to us all the time. What we need to do is be open and receptive. It then becomes a question of looking for what has been termed movements of "consolation" and "desolation."

Consolation most often — but not always — comes from God; desolation from the evil one.

To recognize those movements, a person must be alert to their mind, heart and feelings — both physical and emotional — in order to determine what comes from God and what doesn't.

It's not a question of orders from God. Rather, it's the same kind of stuff that we learn in the course of an intimate friendship. In good friendships, you're always open; there's nothing that you hide.

At the same time both men are extremely uncomfortable with the phrase, "The Lord told me ... (you are to marry Henrietta)."

"Discernment is most authentic and true when it happens in an attitude of profound humility," says Smith. "To be a discerning person, you have to be a praying person."

Praying in this context is more than just talking to God. It is talking to God and listening to what he has to say.

Learn by doing

Test everything against the Scripture and the overall pattern of growth in a person's life.

"The fact that it feels wonderful is never any proof," says Green. Discerning God's will is an art. You learn by doing.


Nevertheless, it's not good enough to be a devout person. You must want to do God's will.

"God may play a significant role in a person's life, one may be a religious fanatic — obsessed by God, by the glory of God — and merely be wedded to one's idea of God and God's will," says Green.



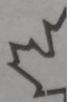



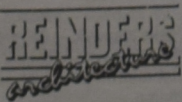
"This, of course, is not really desiring the Lord's will. But it is a very dangerous and deceptive counterfeit, which has caused much suffering in the history of religion and in the lives of individuals."

Ask the followers of Bob Jones, David Koresh, Joseph di Mambro and Luc Joutet.

Classifieds

Classified Rates	Birthdays	Obituaries	Obituaries	Obituaries
<p>Births \$25.00 Marriages & Engagements \$40.00 Anniversaries \$45.00 2-column anniversaries \$90.00 Obituaries \$45.00 Notes of thanks \$35.00 Birthdays \$40.00</p> <p>All other one-column classified advertisements: \$13.50 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$25.00. Letter under file number \$35.00 extra. Photos: \$25.00 additional charge.</p> <p>Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive</p> <p>ATTENTION!</p> <p>a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.</p> <p>b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.</p> <p>c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.</p> <p>d) <i>Christian Courier</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.</p> <p>e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to six column inches. <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$13.50 per column inch (GST incl.).</p> <p>NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS</p> <p>We offer a one-year subscription for only \$20.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the <i>Christian Courier</i> and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$20.00 and the couple's correct address.</p> <p>Christian Courier 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313</p>	 <p><i>Congratulations to Siemkje De Vries on the occasion of her 90th birthday!</i></p> <p>DE VRIES: 1905 1995</p> <p>With great joy we look forward to celebrate the 90th birthday of our mother, grandmother and great-grandmother</p> <p>SIEMKJE DE VRIES on Jan. 3, 1995.</p> <p>We thank God for sustaining her through her life and praise Him that she may witness to His love and faithfulness shown to her.</p> <p>Her thankful children: Bontje & Oeds Wijma — the Neth. Doeke & Helen De Vries — Smithville Henk & Marg De Vries — Brooklyn Jane & Leo Veenstra — Kitchener Alice & Eiko Korvemaker — Wyoming Piet (deceased) & Alice De Vries — Simcoe Marg & Dick Seinen — Nigeria, Africa 30 grandchildren and 61 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Mam's address: Holland Christian Homes, Rm. 215 Faith Manor, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., R.R. #10, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2</p>	<p>Peacefully the Lord called His child BOUWE ELZINGA unto Himself from Shalom Manor, Grimsby, Ont., and took him to his eternal home on Saturday, Dec. 10, 1994, in his 90th year. Formerly of Parkview Meadows, Townsend, Ont.</p> <p>Ps. Hymnal 124:5. <i>Let God be praised with reverence deep;</i> <i>He daily comes our lives to steep</i> <i>In bounties freely given.</i> <i>God cares for us, our God is He;</i> <i>Who would not fear His majesty</i> <i>In earth as well as heaven?</i> <i>Our God upholds us in the strife;</i> <i>To us he grants eternal life,</i> <i>And saves from desolation.</i> <i>He hears the needy when they cry,</i> <i>He saves their souls when death draws nigh,</i> <i>This God is our salvation.</i></p> <p><i>When I stand in Glory</i> <i>I will see His face</i> <i>And there I'll serve my King forever</i> <i>In that holy place.</i> (There is a Redeemer, vs. 3).</p> <p>Beloved husband for 60 years of the late Hinke [Talsma] Elzinga. Thankful for the heritage we have received, his children: Tettje & [Willem, deceased] Vellenga — St. George Clara & George deVlught — Neustadt George & Geraldine Elzinga — Jarvis Annie & Minne Van Der Molen — Jarvis</p> <p>Loving Pake of 26 grandchildren and 53 great-grandchildren. Dear brother of Yke Admiraal of Parkview Meadows, Townsend, Ont.</p> <p>Bouwe milked cows for more than 60 years and played the tuba for 60 years, but was God's child all his life. <i>Praise God in His sanctuary, Praise Him with the sounding of the Trumpet. Praise Him with the harp and lyre. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.</i></p> <p>Funeral service was held at Ebenezer Chr. Ref. Church, Jarvis, Ont., on Wednesday, Dec. 14, 1994, at 11 a.m., Rev. Riemer Praemsa officiating.</p> <p>In the full assurance that he was a child of God</p> <p>ADRIAAN KAMERMAN went to his eternal home, Dec. 11, 1994.</p> <p>He was the beloved husband for 63 years of Janna Kamerman (nee Pols) and the father of: John & Bette Kamerman Cor & Agnes Kamerman Abe & Ann Kamerman Adrian & Nellie Kamerman Femmie & John Feddema Simon & Margaret Kamerman as well as grandfather to 17 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Correspondence address: 7900 McLaughlin Rd., Hope Tower #609, R.R. #10, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2</p>	<p>Suddenly, on Dec. 10, 1994, the Lord took to Himself our brother ERNST FEDDEMA in his 67th year.</p> <p>He was predeceased by his parents Gosse and Theodora (Zylstra) Feddema. He is survived by his wife Henny, and children Bernice and Gary De Vos, and Bill Feddema, and six grandchildren.</p> <p>Pieter & Ytte Feddema — Arhuus, Denmark Anna & Ted Rintjema — Grimsby, Ont. Alma & Ray Heeringa — Bowmanville, Ont. Bob & Gerry Feddema — Strathroy, Ont. Louise & Jerry Boersma — Mount Brydges, Ont. Edna & Fred Nordemann — Penobscus, N.B. Margaret & John Vander Eyk — Lis-towel, Ont. Tina & Tom Schalk — Ilderton, Ont. Tom & Rose Feddema — Denfield, Ont.</p> <p>Jack & Jean Roszell — Samia, Ont. Charlie & Ellen Feddema — Tiverton, Ont. Leukie & Art De Waard — Markham, Ont. Pete & Pat Feddema — Ailsa Craig, Ont. John & Jenny Feddema — Kerwood, Ont.</p> <p>Berkel/Rodenrijns Elora Z.H., the Neth. Ont. 1913 1994</p> <p>"The Lord is my Shepherd" (Ps. 23). On Dec. 13, 1994, the Lord took unto Himself, our dear husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather</p> <p>LEENDERT Klapwyk at the age of 81 years, at his home at R.R. #2, Elora, Ont.</p> <p>Beloved husband of Willempje K. (Van Elderen).</p> <p>Lovingly remembered by his children: Dick & Marilyn Klapwyk — Delta, B.C. Inge & Henk Ensing — Guelph, Ont. Ray & Phyllis Klapwyk — Mt. Vernon, Wash. Pete & Clara Klapwyk — Elora, Ont. John & Joan Klapwyk — Elora, Ont. Mary & Harry VanDyke — Cambridge, Ont. Neil & Ria Klapwyk — Guelph, Ont. Harry & Theresa Klapwyk — Mansfield, Ont. Andy & Ruth Klapwyk — Innerkip, Ont. Jack & Hieke Klapwyk — Elora, Ont. Ed & Wilma Klapwyk — Fergus, Ont. 47 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Correspondence address: R.R. #2, Elora, ON N0B 1S0</p>	<p>The Lord took unto Himself our mother, grandmother and great-grandmother CORNELIA N. LANGENDOEN on Dec. 22, 1994, at the age of 90 years.</p> <p>Born in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. She was predeceased by her husband Bouwe, 1976, and one son, Evert, 1978, and one great-grandchild Jessica.</p> <p>Dear mother of: Arie — Rotterdam, the Neth. Bas & Jean — Thorold Betty — St. Catharines Bert & Jeanette — St. Catharines Bouwe & Alice — St. Catharines Cor & Dien — St. Catharines Andy & Aske — St. Catharines Nell & Harry Bakker — St. Catharines Ron & Hilda — Fort Erie Peter & Ann — St. Catharines and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.</p> <p>"For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord" (Romans 14:7/8).</p> <p>On Nov. 19, 1994, it pleased the Lord to take unto Himself His child, our dear brother-in-law and uncle JAN VAN DER VELDE in his 85th year.</p> <p>F. van der Velde-Horstman — Milton M. van der Velde-de Beer — Britsum A. van der Velde-Sikma — Burlington</p> <p>nephews and nieces Holwerda, Slager and van der Velde.</p> <p>Funeral service was conducted by Rev. F. Heslinga on Nov. 23, 1994. Correspondence address: Mrs. A. van der Velde, 634 Bayshore Blvd., Burlington, ON L7T 1T2.</p>
<p>Church News</p> <p>Christian Reformed Church</p> <p>Address change: — As of Jan. 1, 1995, the address of First Christian Reformed Church, Kingston, Ont., was changed to: 310 Kingscourt Avenue, Kingston, ON K7K 4R3; telephone: (613) 542-8350.</p>	<p>Job Opportunities</p> <p>Full-time help wanted on a dairy cash crop farm in Cobourg, Ont. (905) 342-3131</p> <p>Dutch speaking, live-in caregiver needed immediately for senior lady in Holland Christian Homes, Brampton, Ont. Call John at (416) 293-2938</p>			<p>For Rent</p> <p>One-bedroom apartment available March 1, 1995, in Beamsville, Ont., in Christian home. Very quiet area. Own entrance and own drive. All utilities included. \$450 per month. Call Henry or Diane at (905) 563-3116</p> <p>Personal</p> <p>ONE TO ANOTHER Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5. Write to: #302, 1502-2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 4A2</p>

Classifieds

Miscellaneous	Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities	Miscellaneous
<p>ATTENTION!</p> <p>When you fax your display or classified ads to us, please type them and check spelling BEFORE you transmit the text. Thank you!</p> <p></p> <p>Save money by using our Classifieds!</p>	<p>Calvin College</p> <p></p> <p>The Education Department of Calvin College seeks candidates for a tenure-track faculty position in at least psychology of education, introduction to teaching, and elementary supervision. Responsibilities include teaching courses in these areas, advising students, supervising elementary student teachers, and providing leadership to surrounding school districts.</p> <p>Qualifications include: 1) an earned doctorate (or ABD) in psychology of education or a closely related field; 2) K-12 classroom teaching experience (secondary experience is preferred); and 3) a scholarship agenda. Women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply.</p> <p>Calvin is a Christian college within the Reformed tradition and is an equal employment opportunity employer. Interested applicants should forward a letter stating qualifications and vita to Gloria Goris Stronks, Staff Development Committee, Education Department, Calvin College, 3201 Burton, S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49546.</p>	<p></p> <p>TOUR DIRECTORS NEEDED</p> <p>A Toronto based inbound tour operator handling international passengers needs tour directors and local representatives for Canadian Tour Programmes.</p> <p>Direct or related experience an asset. Language requirements: English/German and any of Dutch, French, Italian and Spanish. If interested in exciting seasonal work please apply in writing (include resume) to:</p> <p>THE JONIK HOSPITALITY GROUP LIMITED 980 Yonge Street, Suite 200, Toronto, ON M4W 2J5</p> <p><i>NO telephone calls please. We thank all applicants, however, only those under consideration will be contacted.</i></p>	<p>For Sale</p> <p>The Bible and Islam by Rev. Bassam Madany (\$4.95 Canada / \$3.95 U.S.). How to relate the gospel relevantly to the Muslim heart and mind. Also available — essays on Understanding the Middle East (\$1.50).</p> <p>Write: The Back to God Hour P.O. Box 5070 Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8</p>	<p>Renew your CC subscription now!</p> <p></p> <p>We love early birds!</p> <p>Our Circulation Manager is at her job every day trying to keep our subscriptions up to date. We spend thousands of dollars each year in postage sending out renewal notices, reminders, etc. To top it off, Canada Post charges us an extra fee for using the handy business-reply envelopes we make available. This means that in order to get a subscription renewed we have to pay close to \$1.00 in postage alone!</p> <p>The computer label on your <i>Christian Courier</i> copy shows the month in which your subscription is due. If your label shows that your subscription is due two or three months from now, <i>kindly consider sending us the renewal fee ahead of time.</i> This way, you will be assured that C.C. will be coming to you regularly, as well as saving us time and postage expenses!</p> <p>Be an early bird! We appreciate your co-operation. Please use the coupon below when sending us your renewal fee.</p>
<p>personalized</p> <p>DUTCH DELFT BLUE style wall plaques</p> <p></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • birth • graduation • Dutch roots story • wedding (anniversary) • immigrant ships <p>ask for catalogue</p> <p>publishers of</p> <p>the Windmill</p> <p>your</p> <p>Dutch-English bi-weekly</p> <p>P.O. Box 313, Lynden, WA 98264 P.O. Bag 9033, Surrey, BC V3T 4X3 (604) 532-1733 fax (604) 532-1734</p>	<p>Diaconal Developer with Diaconal Ministries in Eastern Canada</p> <p>Task description This person will help equip deacons in Eastern Canada to minister in Christ's name.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do workshops on practical diaconal skills and goal setting • provide training and support for resource persons • help diaconal conferences lead deacons into ministry • help prepare educational materials and the annual meeting <p>Skills Required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a clear vision of the deacon's ministry in the CRC. • strong people skills and an ability to train adults in practical, caregiving ministry. • a good ability to encourage, support and work in a team setting. <p>Education/Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA in (adult) education or social work preferred (or the equivalent in work experience) • Candidates with experience in diaconal work or related fields and computer skills in WordPerfect, are preferred. <p></p> <p>For more information/a job description contact: Ben Vandezande, c/o Diaconal Ministries Box 2248, St Catharines, ON, L2M 6P6 Phone: (905) 646-4511 Fax: (905) 646-0951 Please send a resume before January 16, 1995.</p>	<p>Miscellaneous</p> <p></p> <p>MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE PLANNING AND DESIGN OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP EDUCATION AND CARE FACILITIES HAVE MADE US A VALUED BUILDING PARTNER TO MANY CONGREGATIONS AND CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS. PLEASE CALL TO LEARN HOW WE CAN HELP YOU!</p> <p>F.J. Reinders and Associates Limited Architects Engineers Planners Project Managers 101 COUNTY COURT BOULEVARD SUITE 500 BRAMPTON, ON (905) 457-1618</p>	<p>Real Estate</p> <p>ADA REALTY LTD. 6012 Ada Blvd. Edmonton, AB T5W 4N9 (403) 471-1814 Sid Vandermeulen</p> <p>Contact us first when you think of moving to Edmonton and district.</p> <p><i>Het vertrouwde adres.</i></p>	
<p>COUPON</p> <p>Please renew my C.C. subscription for the period indicated:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> one-year renewal. Enclosed is \$39.50 (\$32.00 U.S.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> two-year renewal. Enclosed is \$74.00 (\$60.00 U.S.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> three-year renewal. Enclosed is \$111.00 (\$90.00 U.S.)</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City/Town _____</p> <p>Code _____</p> <p>P.S. If possible, glue your label in this space, or enclose it. Send to: 4-261 Martindale Road, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</p>				

Classifieds

Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities	Miscellaneous
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Seeking a Pastor

The **Christian Reformed Church of Georgetown, Ont.**, is seeking an ordained pastor to work in team ministry, leading us in preaching, teaching and pastoral care, with proven ability for and commitment to youth ministry. A church profile is available upon request. Contact the **Calling Committee, Georgetown Chr. Ref. Church, P.O. Box 45, Georgetown, ON L7G 4T1.**

Miscellaneous



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Full-time Activities Assistant

Hours of Shift

60 hours every two weeks
9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday to Friday
plus four hours extra one Saturday per month.

Qualifications

A certificate in a course related to activities and programming for the elderly is necessary.

Resume to:

Please apply in writing or send resume to
Wilma Wamsteeker, Activation Co-ordinator,
to the above address by **January 30, 1995.**

Sociology Instructor

The **King's University College** requires a Christian academic to fill a vacancy in **sociology**. The successful candidate will teach introductory sociology as well as a two-year cycle of senior-level courses. Preference will be given to applicants with a strong theoretical background whose specializations would enable them to teach in two of the following major areas: social change, social institutions, social psychology, social inequality/differences, and humanity and nature.

The successful candidate must have the doctorate and must be able to articulate and develop a Christian approach to education. Deadline for applications is **February 15, 1994**, starting date is **July 1, 1995**. Applicants should send a letter of application, curriculum vitae, copies of transcripts, and three letters of reference to: **Dr. S. Keith Ward, Vice President Academic, The King's University College, 9125 - 50 St., Edmonton, AB, T6B 2H3. Tel: (403) 465-3500. Fax: (403) 465-3534.**



THE KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
Christian University Education

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ADMINISTRATOR

Langley Christian School is in need of an **administrator** for its new Middle School/High School campus. This new facility will house approximately 180 students from Grades 6-9 in September 1995 and incorporate an additional grade level in each subsequent year so that it will become a 6-12 campus of approximately 400 students in four years time.

LCS is looking for an educational leader who is a committed Christian and who has the experience, vision and the skills necessary to lead this school during these exciting years of development and growth.

Position commences **August 1, 1995**, or earlier.

Inquiries/applications to:

Leo Smit, Principal
c/o 21789-50th Avenue, Langley, BC V3A 3T2
Telephone (604) 533-2222 Fax (604) 533-7276

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St. Catharines, ON
L2W 1A1

Classifieds/Events

Events	Events	Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous	Events
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Students from the University of Alberta, Past and Present!

You are Invited to Attend

The CRC Chaplaincy 20th Anniversary Banquet

Water to Wine: Celebration of Learning



Speaker: Dr. Deborah Stienstra
Location: WestEnd CRC
Tickets: \$16.00 (includes wine)
Contact: Tom Oosterhuis
 SUB 158 F
 University of Alberta
 T6G 2J7
 (403)492-5327 or (403) 483-8153

January 27, 1995
 Coffee/Cocktails 6:30 p.m.: Dinner 7 p.m.

Don't be afraid of a little blood.

On any given day, someone in your community needs blood. Someone with hemophilia or another bleeding disorder. Someone giving birth or undergoing surgery.

When they need it, we want to make sure that blood is there waiting.

You can help ensure that it is by being a blood donor.

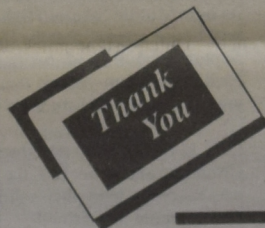
We're the largest national consumer organization working to ensure that, for people with bleeding disorders, the bleeding stops. And for all Canadians, blood flows freely and safely. So, please, roll up your sleeves and help us do that job.

If you're not afraid of a little blood, call us toll free at 1-800-668-2686.

Canadian Hemophilia Society
 We're all related by blood.



NC



A special thanks to the subscribers who so faithfully pay ahead of time in response to the "early bird" ad.

Grace (circulation)

Events

Calendar of Events

Jan. 13-15 Dordt College Concert Choir 1995 Winter Tour. Jan. 13: 8 p.m., Maranatha CRC, Bowmanville, Ont.; Jan. 14: 8 p.m., Maranatha CRC, Cambridge, Ont.; Jan. 15: 8 p.m., First CRC, Sarnia, Ont.

Jan. 13 Piano recital by Redeemer College alumnus Fred De Haan (works by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, etc.), 8 p.m., RC auditorium, Ancaster, Ont. Free-will offering.

Jan. 14 Concert by the "Dordt College Concert Choir," 8 p.m., Maranatha CRC, Cambridge, Ont.

Jan. 28 Organ concert by Christiaan Teeuwssen (works by Widor, Reger and Liszt), 8 p.m., Centenary United Church, 24 Main St. E., Hamilton, Ont. Tickets: (905) 648-2131.

Feb. 8 Second annual "Church and the Law" seminar, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Queensway Cathedral, 1536 The Queensway, Etobicoke, Ont. Last year more than 570 ministers and

church leaders attended! The 1995 seminar is co-ordinated in conjunction with the Canadian Council of Christian Charities. Info. and registration: CCCC, Elmira, Ont. Phone: (519) 669-5137, fax: (519) 669-3291.

Feb. 17-19 "Serving Christ in the Nineties" conference at Mt. Carmel Retreat Centre, Niagara Falls, Ont. Keynote speaker: Dr. Al Wolters. Theme: "Passing on the Reformed vision from one generation to the next." Info: (905) 684-3991.

April 29/30 "And your daughters shall prophesy" — celebrating our gift of voice, a conference of encouragement for women of the Chr. Ref. Church. Keynote address, workshops and worship. Location: CRC, Richmond Hill, Ont. Conference registrar: Janet Suk Roukema. Info: (905) 451-8240.



Dordt College Concert Choir 1995 Winter Tour

Lansing, Illinois
 Bethel CRC
 Jan. 11, 8:00 p.m.

Kalamazoo, Michigan
 Third CRC
 Jan. 12, 8:00 p.m.

Bowmanville, Ontario
 Maranatha CRC
 Jan. 13, 8:00 p.m.

Cambridge, Ontario
 Maranatha CRC
 Jan. 14, 8:00 p.m.

Sarnia, Ontario
 First CRC
 Jan. 15, 8:00 p.m.

Oak Lawn, Illinois
 Calvin CRC
 Jan. 16, 8:00 p.m.

Not enough, and too much

Reformed Perspective (Nov. 1994) is deeply disappointed in the Prime Minister and his government. He should start "giving firm, decisive leadership to this nation," says Perspective. He has not done enough about Canada's deficit, nor about the evil of abortion. But at the same time people expect too much from the government.

"Whenever society faces a problem, the people look to the government to solve it. People say, 'The government should do something about it....' The electorate puts many responsibilities on the shoulders of governments at various levels. Governments accept these responsibilities, draw up policies, appoint committees, outline programs, add employees to the bureaucracy... and need money to help pay for these plans.

"On the one hand people shift responsibility to the government, and on the other hand people scream that the taxes are too high. When will Canadians learn that the two go together?

"Then the government discovers that there is no money to pay for all the programs and it starts talking about cutting them. What is the first reaction? People are upset. Some demonstrate. Others lobby the

government. And before long plans are changed. Watch the actions of the Minister of Finance to see what deep cuts are going to be made. Watch what comes out of Mr. Axworthy's paper on social policy. Check your papers to find out how the local government deals with deficit reduction and balancing the budget.

"Governments will not be able to carry on business as usual and act as if the financial problem will automatically evaporate. Our leaders might as well start preparing citizens for tough times ahead. I also realize that there are no easy solutions to many of the economic problems. What I have not seen is an honest effort to deal with them. Our task as Christians toward the government remains: pray that the Lord may give the government wisdom, vision, courage and faith."

More religious holidays?

Christian Week of Nov. 1 tackled the problem of special holidays "for people of other faiths." Muslims and Jews have asked that their special days be officially recognized as the Christian "holy days" of Christmas, Good Friday and Easter are. The matter is especially important for teachers and students. The Supreme Court has already given a favorable response. What should the position of Christians be? We read:

"What about people of other faiths who have days as important to them as Christmas and Easter are to Christians? Should they be allowed time off with pay on days that are especially important to them? That, in a nub, is the question. The courts are clearly leaning toward the yes side, though they set the condition that the request must be 'reasonable.'

"In some places employers have adopted a system of discretionary family days, from three to five days, during which workers can take leave with pay for events or observances that are important to them, but in some cases such leaves, taken

for religious reasons, have been disallowed.

"Using discretionary days as religious, paid holidays means that considerable tolerance needs to be exercised. An Ontario government survey of 61 religious groups, for example, found that the number of important religious days was as high as 14 for some groups, or as few as one or two.

"Nonetheless, it should not be unreasonable to have a system of discretionary days, limited in number, which employees or students would be able to take to observe what is of fundamental importance to them. Thereafter, for those who

would insist on more, they should be taken as unpaid days.

"Christians will not hurt their cause by extending to others the rights they want for themselves. We should do it as a matter of principle. The result will certainly be fewer barriers to sharing our faith, not more."



The Living Word

Sermons for reading services.

Contact:

R. Vander Ploeg Secy./Treas.

210 Clarke St. N.

Woodstock, ON N4S 7M7

Phone: (519) 539-2117

Church press

Jacob Kuntz

About Dutch Mennonites

The associate editor of the Mennonite Reporter, Margaret Loewen Reimer, is in the Netherlands and wrote a "European journal" in the Oct. 31 issue. In it she told about her experiences in that country. She also compared Dutch "Mennonites" (the Doopsgezinden) with Mennonites in Canada. We quote:

"The old and the new interact in curious ways in a country like this. A nation in which everyone rides plain old bicycles may seem old-fashioned — until you see the intricate network of roadlanes, traffic lights, bridge ramps and parking lots just for bikes. Making high school students still study Greek and Latin may seem 'old world' until you realize that they also learn modern French, English, German and Spanish besides their native Dutch.

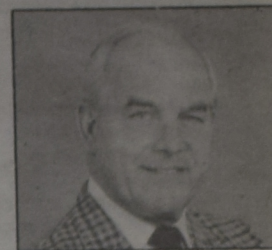
"Another strange juxtaposition between the new and the old is the Mennonite church here. Dutch Mennonites worship in historic buildings dating back to the 1600s, but they have no museums and little obsession with the past. They are the original children of Menno, but do not carry the name Men-

nonite and are indistinguishable from the culture around them.

"We who have wandered far from the old country seem to be the ones preoccupied with the old. We are intent on preserving the customs, the artifacts and the language of worlds we no longer live in. In a way, we represent the 'old world' more than Europeans do.

"On the other hand, worship services in this country are highly traditional and 'old-fashioned' compared to the

quotes



North American churches I am familiar with. The minister conducts the whole service, the sermon is central (and therefore longer), and the congregation sings only in unison.

"All this reminds me of how little we know about each other's worlds. We know something about Dutch Anabaptists in the 16th century, but what do we know about the church here today? And what do we know about us?"

A new cardinal

The Archbishop of Montreal, Jean-Claude Turcotte, was elevated to the College of Cardinals on Nov. 26 during a meeting with Pope John Paul II in Rome. He was one of 30 new cardinals who received their biretta from the Pope. There are now four Canadian cardinals.

The Catholic Register of Dec. 10 informed us about a press conference held by the new cardinal. His words indicate what kind of man he is.

"During a press conference after his nomination, Turcotte noted that his family, while not poor, lived modestly. He knew the city's poor. 'As a young priest, I asked Cardinal Leger if I could be a priest in a poor parish. He said yes, and I think that was a grace.

"We as Canadians have certain causes that are dear to us: the question of the promotion of women in society and in the church," he said. He told reporters that 'things move for-

ward little by little. What we forget sometimes is that the Catholic Church is a universal church."

"He resisted reporters' attempts to place him in a theological camp. 'I don't think I can be classified as a conservative,' he said. 'I have the ideas I have, and I am a man who is faithful to the church.'"

Jacob Kuntz is a retired pastor who works part time in Holland Christian Homes in Brampton, Ont.

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News

God 'put the kettle on' for war vet

Carl D. Tuyt

EDMONTON — Harry Kuperus walks among his parishioners with a smile on his face, grey hair, eyes that spark of sympathy behind glasses, stooped slightly, incarnating a mixture of passion and patience. He knows all his men by name. He often stops to chat with them, and here and there a resident gets an encouraging pat on the arm. Harry's ministry is an *affaire de coeur*. His heart reaches out to these men. He feels at home in the Mewburn Veterans Centre in Edmonton and he likes his ministry.

Chaplain Kuperus is a courageous man. He followed the clinical pastoral education required for chaplaincy ministry at an age when most other men have comfortably settled into their chosen career. It takes courage to uproot your life, and start off in a new professional field. Training for chaplaincy is not to be compared to a course in basket weaving. It is a difficult preparation which requires ruthlessly honest self-evaluation, tough peer critique, integration of one's theology into the practice of ministry, and the stamina of a teenager.

Not conventional

Harry stuck to it and finished the course with success. Convinced of his calling as a chaplain he patiently awaited the affirmation of that call by being offered a position.

The ministry at the Mewburn Centre is not for the faint-hearted.

It is not your conventional two-sermons-with-coffee-and-tea-visits-through-the-week-kind of ministry. It takes courage to bring the Good News to a place where bad news seems to abound.

To a superficial observer Harry's ministry among the veterans might be like ministry in a spiritual black hole, where all religion has vanished into oblivion. Harry would not agree. As a matter of fact, Harry experiences God's gracious presence in peculiar but nevertheless powerful ways.

Earl, the double amputee whose mind is usually muddled in the maze of merciful and painless dullness, where words ricochet off his brain, will all of a sudden move one of his stumps to the rhythm of "Jesus Loves Me." Somehow the tune, the words, the message of the

song — something — penetrates some vestige of Earl's awareness. In that rhythmic moving stump of a leg Harry finds affirmation of his ministry. Perhaps it is stronger

remembrances of God's benevolence were awash in John's severely damaged memory. They swarmed around in his brain mixed with other signs and tokens of

the kettle on."

Perhaps it was the greatest affirmation of ministry any pulpiteer has ever experienced. "God put the kettle on" might not sound like the theme of a success story worthy of lofty kudos in some professional theological magazine. But Chaplain Kuperus thinks of it as a wonderful blessing of his ministry, and I tend to agree with him.

Forgotten heroes

I left the Mewburn Centre filled with admiration not only for Harry's ministry but for the service all our chaplains provide. Their ministry is a little known and perhaps even little appreciated part of the Christian Reformed Church.

Almost 10 per cent of our ordained ministers are chaplains, yet their exceptional pastoral skills are seldom recognized. It is not often that chaplains are delegated to major assemblies of our denomination, and church councils don't usually acknowledge their resourcefulness. Their story keeps being contained, locked away in the pages of agendas of synod which are not everyone's favorite readings.

They are the ministers, however, who by God's grace can make a double amputee move his stumps to the rhythm of "Jesus Loves Me," and who can evoke from an almost vanished consciousness the memory of God's goodness: "God put the kettle on."

Who would say he hasn't?



Rev. Harry Kuperus

affirmation than the polite, ecclesiastically courteous "hand-shaking-enjoyed-your-sermon" with which many ministers must be satisfied.

Each man responded

There was the other resident. Let me call him John. A man whose memories of life and love and wars have mostly floated away on the waves of Alzheimer's disease. Invisible cruel forces have chewed away at his memory during his residence at Mewburn. He fought that last battle which he could not win and wound up in a twilight zone where he does not recognize shapes or names. Yet when he is able to do so, he attends Harry's Bible study.

One time when Harry spoke about God's grace and God's goodness, he asked the people in attendance to recall together some of God's good graces. Each man answered in turn. They mentioned a long list of our Creator's good gifts: my family, the nurses, the centre, our food. Every patient took his turn naming one of God's gifts. Then it was John's turn.

Somehow mysteriously John had caught at least something of the drift of the conversation. Vague but apparently indelible

benevolence.

A sudden smile appeared on John's face like a ray of sun on a cloudy day. John wrestled to make some connection between God's goodness and all the privileges and pleasures he had experienced in life. In a wonderful, miraculous moment of triumph of mind over void, he blurted out his contribution to the list of graces: "God put

Northern city to host nordic sport

THUNDER BAY (Canadian Scene) — In March 1995, Thunder Bay will be the first Canadian city to host the *Nordic World Ski Championships*. Closer to Winnipeg than it is to Toronto, Thunder Bay will attract 50,000 ski enthusiasts from all over Canada and the rest of the world, as 300 million spectators watch the event via satellite television. Some 40 countries will be represented at the ski jumping, cross country and nordic skiing events.

No visit to Thunder Bay is complete without a trip to Fort William, one of the most perfect replicas of a historic complex

that has ever been built. In the early 1800s, Fort William occupied a pivotal place in the vast fur trading network of the Northwest Company.

The reconstruction is located some 14 km from the site of the original fort because, located as it is in a wilderness area, it offers the visitor unspoiled vistas without a sight of a modern building. The fort's buildings are occupied by costumed staff, who go about the daily tasks common to the historic times in which Fort William flourished.

Only the sight and sound of planes remind visitors that they are in the 20th century.

News Digest

Most believe

Mandela leads well

VICTORIA, South Africa — A large majority of South African citizens approve of President Nelson Mandela's leadership of the country, according to a recent Markinor survey of political attitudes, reports the South African newspaper *Business Day*.

In the survey, 83 per cent of blacks, 55 per cent of whites, 65 per cent of Indians and 51 per cent of coloreds believe Mandela is leading the country very or fairly well.

In an evaluation of major politicians, respondents were asked to rank political leaders on a scale from one to 10. Among black respondents, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa were ranked at 7.4 and 7.1 respectively. Deputy President F.W. de Klerk registered 4.5, while Mandela topped the list with 9.1.

For whites, coloreds and Indians, De Klerk came first between 7.5 and 6.6. Mandela was a close second. Mandela, who was rated with a 4.3 by whites in November last year, boosted his popularity to 5.6.

Concerning political parties, 88 per cent of blacks said they would vote for the ANC if an election were held tomorrow. Second to the ANC among this group was the Pan Africanist Congress, whose total potential support stood at 16 per cent while the National Party (NP) came third with a potential 12 per cent.

The NP received 56 per cent support from whites, while 48 per cent of coloreds and 36 per cent of Indians expressed support for the party.

Thinkbit

"God heals through the same means by which he afflicts: memory is both affliction and healing."

From: Pilgrimage of a Proselyte